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SUMMARY
OF
THE PRINCIPAL MEASURES
OF
THE VICEROYALTY
OF
THE EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE
IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND AGRICULTURE,
JANUARY 1894—DECEMBER 1898.



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SUMMARY
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CHAPTER I.

PREFATORY.

In scope, division of subjects, and general arrangement, this *Scope of the Note.* Summary follows the earlier departmental narratives of principal measures of the administration of Lord Ripon, Lord Dufferin and Lord Lansdowne. It covers the whole range of subjects dealt with in the Department, and the division of chapters conforms generally to the arrangement of the report of the Famine Commission of 1878, whose recommendations laid the foundations of the work of the Department, and have largely guided its policy since its reconstitution in 1881. In addition to being a record of the principal measures of the period dealt with, each summary thus forms a continuing history of the measures adopted from time to time to carry out the suggestions of the Commission after the great famine of 1876-78. The important despatches and resolutions referred to in the summary are quoted at the end of each chapter and bound in a separate volume.

2. During the past five years the Department has been under *Officers in charge of the Department.* the direct control of the following members of the Executive Council of the Governor-General :—

Sir A. P. MacDonnell, K. C. S. I., to 5th April 1895.

Sir A. Mackenzie, K. C. S. I., from 11th April 1895, to 17th December 1895.

Sir John Woodburn, K.C.S.I., from 23rd December 1895 to 6th April 1898.

Mr. C. M. Rivaz, C.S.I., from 9th April 1898.

(Also officiated from 18th October 1897 to 18th February 1898.)

3. The following have been Secretaries in the Department :

Secretaries.

Sir E. C. Buck, Kt., K.C.S.I., to 30th November 1896.

(On special duty with the Department from 25th August 1895 to 30th November 1896.)

Mr. Denzil Ibbetson, C.S.I., from 1st December 1896 to 2nd July 1898.

(Also officiated from 23rd July 1894 to 30th November 1896.)

Mr. T. W. Holderness, C.S.I., from 3rd July 1898.

(Also on special duty as Deputy Secretary (Famine), from 18th January 1897 to 7th November 1897.)

*Under-Secretaries.***4. The following have been Under-Secretaries :**

Mr. E. D. Maclagan, to 24th March 1895.

Mr. E. V. Levinge, from 25th March to 2nd August 1895.

Mr. F. G. Sly, from 3rd August 1895 to 5th January 1898.

(Also on special duty with the Department from 17th July to 5th August 1894 and from 20th September to 31st October 1894. Officiated from 6th August to 19th September 1894 as Under-Secretary and from 10th to 29th March 1896 as Secretary. Temporary Deputy Secretary in the Department from 6th January to 2nd February 1898.)

Mr. E. Maconochie, from 6th January 1898.

(Also officiated from 21st June to 19th September 1897.)

CHAPTER II.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

5. Both in its revenue and in its agricultural aspect the duty of the Department may be broadly described as the material advancement of the people. In its administration of the land it is concerned with questions of great importance to their well-being. To simplify the assessment of the land revenue, to ensure equity and moderation in the demands of the State without undue sacrifice of its interests, to give security of tenure to tenants, to protect the proprietary classes from expropriation, are a few of the many problems which demand constant attention on its revenue side. The extent to which and the manner in which they have come under consideration during the past quinquennial period will be found discussed in the IVth to VIIth Chapters of this Summary. Not less serious and important are the responsibilities which rest upon the Department in the relief of distress caused by famine. During the period under review the measures organized in fulfilment of these responsibilities have for the first time been put to a severe test, and the results are described in the IIIrd Chapter. The greater part of the remainder of the Summary relates to the more novel and not less difficult duties of the Department as an organizer of economic and scientific investigation, and of measures of agricultural improvement. Its work under these heads during the past has been historically summarized by Sir E. Buck in a separate compilation, and to him was entrusted the task of formulating before his retirement from service the general lines of future action. A series of eight Resolutions, published on the 20th March 1897, embodies the programme which has been devised for the guidance of the imperial and provincial Agricultural Departments, of which the first is here quoted in full as it affords a clear statement of the circumstances which have led up to the present position.

*Duties of the Department.**Administration of the Land.**Relief of Famine.**Scientific Enquiry and Agricultural Improvement.*

2. The policy of creating special departments to investigate the conditions of agriculture in India with a view to agricultural improvement was first brought forward in 1866 by the Commission appointed to deal with the Orissa famine, and the subject was brought under very full consideration by Lord Mayo's Government in 1870. The result of the deliberations then held was an important scheme for the constitution of both imperial and provincial departments of agriculture. It was represented to Her Majesty's Secretary of State that while a central department was necessary for co-ordinating the programme of enquiry and the results of investigation, yet that the 'real work of studying and improving agriculture must rest with provincial departments.' It was proposed therefore that a department should be created in every province under the control of an official director. In accordance however with the Secretary of State's instructions the step first taken was the formation in 1871 of a new branch of the imperial secretariat which was to deal with the development of the general scheme. This measure was followed in 1875 by the establishment of a provincial department of agriculture in the North-Western Provinces by Sir John Strachey who had, as a member of Lord Mayo's Government, taken a leading part in the original programme. Further development was checked by the financial difficulties which were due to the famine and scarcity prevailing in 1876, 1877 and 1878, and which not only prevented new

action in the provinces but led to the temporary suppression of the imperial department in 1879. It is interesting however to note that the very famine which thus arrested progress brought about the resuscitation of Lord Mayo's scheme on a wider and firmer basis by attracting renewed attention to the importance of improving Indian agriculture. The original scheme had been initiated by the Commission which dealt with the Orissa famine. The revised scheme was put forward ten years later by the 'Famine Commission' which investigated the causes and phenomena of famine in all parts of India. The fact that the creation of agricultural departments has thus been twice due to the deliberate and unprejudiced conclusions formed by special Commissions appointed to advise the Government on the action which should be taken to cope with famine and scarcity, brings into prominent importance at the present time, when the empire is again suffering from a widespread failure of the harvests, all questions relating to the development of the scheme for agricultural improvement.

3. The Famine Commission was sent out in 1878 to this country at the instance of Parliament with a mission to enquire "how far it is possible for Government, by its action, to diminish the severity of famines or to place the people in a better condition for enduring them." The Commissioners, after a prolonged tour through India, submitted their report in 1880. They gave prominent consideration to the desirability of extending railways and communications; of enlarging the canal system; and of otherwise expanding the large protective works of the country. They also suggested the measures which should be taken on the actual occurrence of scarcity or famine. But the greater part of their report was occupied with recommendations for the reform of land administration and for the promotion of agricultural improvement. They considered that agricultural prosperity in ordinary times was the best shield against the difficulties and trials of a season of drought, and insisted on the necessity of taking every measure which might, on the one hand, prevent or minimize agricultural loss and distress, or, on the other hand, tend to increase and improve the produce of agricultural land. They advised that for dealing with these matters imperial and provincial departments of agriculture should be established.

4. In pursuance of the Famine Commissioners' advice an imperial department was created in 1881, which at once, under the instructions of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, took measures to arrange with the local Governments for the organization of provincial departments. In an opening Resolution of 1881, the duties of the new departments were summed up by the Government of India following the Secretary of State, as agricultural enquiry, agricultural improvement, and famine relief. The third of these duties, which is concerned with the conduct of operations in the actual event of scarcity, has been dealt with in the famine codes drawn up in 1882 and revised in recent years, and form no part of the discussions now under review. Present considerations are confined to the measures which should be taken to secure an effective scheme of agricultural enquiry, *i.e.*, the collection of agricultural information, facts and statistics, and to open the way to improvements in agricultural methods and practices.

5. No pains were spared by the imperial and provincial Governments to subject the recommendations of the Famine Commissioners to the most intelligent criticism that could be brought to bear upon them. Every scheme or measure of importance that was from time to time proposed or suggested was placed before a conference at which every province concerned was represented by selected officials and experts connected with the administration of land or with the conduct of the agricultural departments. Thus in, 1882, a *first* conference was convened at Calcutta at which the principles were determined on which future cadastral surveys which are the basis of agricultural statistics should be conducted. A *second* general conference, held at Calcutta in 1883, prepared a scheme for the registration of inland trade statistics, and for the compilation and publication of agricultural and trade returns. A *third* at Delhi in 1888 dealt with the important subject of agricultural education.

6. In 1889, correspondence with Her Majesty's Secretary of State led to an important event in the history of the agricultural programme, *viz.*, the deputation to India of a second Commission from home in the person of Dr. Voelcker, consulting chemist to the Royal Agricultural Society, whose mission was 'to advise on the best course to be adopted in order to apply the teachings of agricultural chemistry, and in order to effect improvements in Indian agriculture.' Every branch of agricultural enquiry and reform was thus to be open to his examination. Dr. Voelcker, following the example of the Famine Commissioners, made a tour through India and gained a general knowledge of the directions in which agricultural enquiry and improvement might be developed. His report may be viewed as an amplification in detail of the recommendations of the Famine Commissioners, with which in all important matters his views were in general accord.

In every province he had the opportunity of consulting the local authorities, and before writing his report had the advantage of meeting at Simla, a *fourth* general conference of delegates and experts from all provinces who went over with him the whole ground of the Famine Commissioners' recommendations so far as they applied to agricultural enquiry and improvement. His report when received two years later was submitted at Simla in 1893 to the consideration of a *fifth* general conference, whose recommendations have now been separately discussed by a committee of selected officers at the headquarters of each province.

7. The Governor General in Council is not disposed to regret the time which has been occupied by continuous deliberation. The scheme of 1880 was so vast in its design, so important^t in its objects, so wide in its scope, as to demand that the utmost care and caution should be bestowed on its full development. Material progress has indeed been made. The earlier years of the past decade were occupied in laying the foundations of agricultural enquiry by the organization of land-record establishments, in inaugurating investigation in many important directions and in developing plans of agricultural experiment. Each successive conference led to further advance and to new measures. But the general principles and policy by which the whole scheme of agricultural enquiry and improvement were to be governed had not been finally or precisely formulated. The very complete examination of the issues left for decision, which has now been made by provincial authorities and local governments, places the Government of India for the first time in a position to amplify, with further approach to precision, the instructions of the Resolution of 1881, in which the duties of imperial and agricultural departments were necessarily sketched only in broad and rough outline. It must be understood, however, that progress has only advanced to one more stage. Every step that is taken in future years will lead to further knowledge of facts and conditions, and will open up new issues. The time may soon come when the combined advice and counsel of provincial authorities, and of the experts by whom they are aided, will again be required for placing provincial and imperial governments in a position to decide what further measures are necessary to secure safe progress.

8. The despatch in which the duties of agricultural departments were formulated by the Secretary of State indicated the desirability of postponing any general consideration of the possibilities of agricultural improvement until a proper system of agricultural enquiry had been set on foot. The Government of India adopted this view. They pointed out, however, that an investigating agency must be established before enquiry could begin. The Resolution of 1881 indicated that the first measure must be the organization of machinery for the continuous collection of facts and statistics concerning the agriculture of the country. Ten years previously Lord Mayo had insisted that the "splendid local machinery of which we are in possession in our local establishments closely connected with the operations of agriculture, should be utilized in the collection and production of those agricultural statistics which are so essential to the development of agricultural progress." The same opinion was held by the Famine Commissioners, and was accepted by both the Secretary of State and the Government of India.

The measures taken to introduce or improve land-records establishments, will form the subject of the *second* Resolution; the system adopted to utilise their services and the agricultural statistics supplied by them will be dealt with in the *third* Resolution.

9. But the scheme of agricultural enquiry, as set forth by the Famine Commissioners and by the Secretary of State in 1880 and 1881, involved the investigation of wider fields than that occupied by the facts and statistics of the land-records. These latter, it is true, supply continuous information regarding crops, irrigation, the occupancy and cultivation of land, and other circumstances connected with agriculture, without which no sound conclusions can be formed as to the general condition and needs of each agricultural tract. But, as pointed out by the Famine Commissioners, and later on by Dr. Voelcker, investigation had to be extended to all matters which affect agricultural prosperity. The character of soils and the manures suited to them; the diseases of cattle; the diseases of plants—their causes, and the means by which they can be prevented, minimized or cured; the extension of irrigation; the effect and value of canal water; the improvement of fuel and fodder supplies; the reclamation of waste lands; meteorological phenomena; economic products; improvement of old, and introduction of new, staples and agricultural implements; possible reforms in the methods and practices of cultivation; all such subjects as these were to form part of the programme of enquiry.

10. It was evident that in exploring the fields of investigation thus briefly sketched, the agricultural departments, imperial and provincial, must, as the Famine Commissioners had indicated, be assisted by competent experts. Some of the ground indeed had already been occupied by scientific investigators: thus for many years geological officers had been engaged in ascertaining the rocks and strata of each province; systematic botanists had explored and arranged the flora of forests and fields; a meteorological department had laid the foundation of a knowledge of the weather and climates of India; while in some provinces, and notably in Madras, measures had been taken to investigate and improve agricultural conditions. But it was obvious that much more was necessary for the completion of the programme of enquiry, and it was equally clear that the responsibility of directing its gradual expansion must be, for some time to come, divided between the imperial and provincial authorities. In other words, that there must be an imperial as well as a provincial scheme of scientific enquiry. In many directions the work of investigation was national rather than local in character. It demanded the services of first class experts, such as each province could not afford and did not indeed separately require. The existing departments of geology and meteorology were cases in point. Scientific research in such fields could not be restricted to geographical or administrative limits, and would, if confined within narrower limits than those of the empire, involve waste of power and unnecessary expenditure. Influenced by these views, the Government of India accepted the responsibility of widening, under imperial direction, the scheme of national investigation, hitherto covering only a limited portion of the ground which had to be occupied. Thus, economic products, cattle diseases, agricultural entomology, were some of the subjects which were between 1880 and 1890 brought for the first time under systematic enquiry by experts attached to the imperial department.

The general character of the national scheme of scientific enquiry, under imperial direction, the extent to which it has been widened, the directions in which further amplification is necessary or desirable, and the association with it of provincial co-operation, form the subject of the *fourth* Resolution of this series.

11. To provincial departments, under the control and direction of local Governments, is left the largest share in the programme of scientific enquiry. It embraces all such investigations by experts as may properly and usefully be confined within geographical and administrative limits and includes, therefore, almost all enquiries and efforts directly aimed at the increase of agricultural produce.

Such are, for instance, investigations having for their object the improvement of old, and the introduction of new, staples; the effect and value of canal water; reform in agricultural methods and practices, and the like. Enquires of this kind are dependent on local conditions of soil, climate, custom, etc., and have often indeed to be carried out at various centres within each province. Government farms, estates under the management of Courts of Wards, estates belonging to Government, farms of landholders willing to co-operate with the provincial departments; these are the experimental fields in which the local experts are mainly required to work.

The general character of the scheme of scientific enquiry under provincial direction will be dealt with in the *fifth* Resolution.

12. The recommendations of Dr. Voelcker, of the two conferences of 1890 and 1893, as well as of those recently held, have confirmed the view that investigation must precede improvement. But, as investigation proceeds in the numerous fields in which it has been or will be inaugurated, palpable and conclusive improvements are, as experience has shown, continually brought to light; remedies for existing evils are discovered and useful modifications of agricultural practices are ascertained. Every effort should now be made to take such measures as will permit the country to derive the fullest advantage from these results. The most important matter is the proper education of the agriculturist. For the Government of India still hold to the opinion expressed in the opening Resolution of 1881, and again in the Resolutions convening the conferences of 1890, 1893, and 1895-96, that no important reforms can be safely or widely introduced into the agricultural system without the general co-operation of the farming classes, whose intelligent and willing aid cannot be expected 'until their education has been so directed as to enable them to appreciate and, where expedient, to adopt the results obtained by the systematic and continuous enquiries of experts.' This view has been strongly confirmed by the various conferences which have recently discussed the question, and has been supported by all local governments and administrations concerned.

The subject of educational reform, so far as it concerns agricultural interests, will be dealt with in the *sixth* Resolution of the series.

13. In the despatch of 1881, in which the views of the Secretary of State on the duties of the new departments of Agriculture were communicated, attention was drawn to the obligation which the Famine Commissioners had desired to be placed on them 'to render available agricultural and economic facts and statistics for every part of India in order that Government and its officers may always be in possession of an adequate knowledge of the actual condition of the country, its population and resources.' A wide interpretation must be given to this injunction. It must be held to mean that the results of investigation in every branch of enquiry which is taken under the control of the imperial and provincial departments, must be intelligently collated and published on such a plan as will bring the information gathered in an accessible form to the early knowledge of those whom it may concern. Much has been done in this direction, but the development of the scheme of publication still stands in great need of the further attention and co-operation of provincial departments. The measures which have been taken or may be required for giving effect to the injunctions of the 1881 despatch, and for establishing a sound system of publishing information bearing on the condition, population and resources of the country will form the subject of the *seventh* Resolution.

14. The agricultural conference of 1893 recommended in the course of their proceedings that the form of the annual reports of Agricultural Departments should be so revised as to bring them into greater conformity with the scheme of their work. The subject was not formally discussed at the recent conferences, in view of the fact that no general scheme could be elaborated until the whole series of conference proceedings had been brought under the review of the provincial and

imperial Governments. But the Government of India is now prepared to formulate the general principles on which departmental reports should be framed, and these will be suggested in the *eighth* and final Resolution of these series.

15. The Resolutions which have thus been announced are the outcome of the experience and developments of the fifteen years which have passed since the Famine Commissioners' report was, under the orders of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, first made the foundation of an agricultural programme. They purposely avoid instructions on matters of detail, but aim at a clear and full definition of the large and broad principles on which the scheme of agricultural enquiry and improvement should proceed. They are thus primarily designed for the guidance of officers in charge of agricultural departments upon whom the duty of giving effect to them should be strictly imposed. In view, however, of the importance which the Government of India attaches to the possession by all officials of a general knowledge of the policy which has been gradually developed from the Famine Commissioners' recommendations, the Resolutions should, when opportunity occurs, be studied by all land revenue officials, and the Government of India suggest that they might with advantage be made one of the subjects to be read for the official examinations which junior revenue officers are required to pass.

Principal papers referred to :—

Resolution No. 3, dated 20th March 1897.

CHAPTER III.

FAMINE RELIEF.

6. Amongst the measures adopted at the instance of the Famine Commission of 1878-80 was the preparation by each Provincial Government of a Famine Code for the guidance of officials in matters of famine administration. These codes were in force during the wide-spread scarcity of 1891-92, and the operations rendered necessary by the failure of the harvests in that year brought certain defects in them to notice. In the last year of Lord Lansdowne's Viceroyalty full and final instructions were issued on all points which had come under consideration, and the Provincial Governments were requested to revise the existing codes accordingly. The new codes were received in the course of the following year and in the autumn of 1895 the orders of the Government of India sanctioning the modifications proposed in them were issued. They were put to a severe test during the great famine which affected the country in 1896-97, and although they bore the trial well on the whole, they will, as is indicated later in this chapter, be subjected to further revision in the light of the experience so recently gained.

Famine Codes.

7. The years 1894 and 1895 were free from any serious scarcity, though mention must be made of the distress which prevailed from April to December 1894 in the districts of Saugor and Damoh in the Central Provinces. Measures were taken by the local Administration to deal with the situation with satisfactory results in that no deaths from starvation, no emigration, and no abandonments of holdings were reported. In two districts—Jhansi and Garhwal—of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, an alarm was also sounded in the spring of 1895, but the distress was short-lived and disappeared with the advent of the rains.

Scarcities of 1894 and 1895.

8. An important enquiry relating to the classification of protective lines of railways was instituted by the Government of India in the autumn of 1895. The Famine Commission had in their report (Part II) already indicated in a general manner the tracts of country that needed such protection most urgently. The object of the enquiry of 1895 was to obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State to the classification of other lines as protective, in order that contribution might be made towards the cost of their construction from the Famine Insurance Fund, and the Local Governments were asked to furnish the Government of India with a list of a limited number of railway projects for their respective Provinces. The recommendations of the Provincial Governments have been received and will receive consideration as opportunity occurs. Certain projects in Madras, Bengal and the Central Provinces were, it may be noted, commended specially to the notice of the Railway Conferences of 1897 and 1898.

Protective lines of railway in India.

9. The cause of the famine of 1896-97 was the early cessation of the autumn rains of 1896. All Provinces were affected in a greater or lesser degree by the almost universal drought and failure of crops. In

The Famine of 1896-97.

Madras.

Madras two distinct areas were affected—the Deccan and the Northern Districts on the East Coast known as the Circars. In the former the distress was severe, but in the Circars, where relief measures were undertaken over scattered areas, distress was later in declaring itself and was throughout sporadic in type and the numbers on relief were relatively smaller. Relief works were first opened in November 1896 and it was not till the end of October 1897 that the famine was practically over.

Bombay.

10. The districts affected in Bombay were the same as those in which the great famine of 1876-77 prevailed. The whole Presidency (excluding Sind) suffered from the early cessation of the south-west monsoon of 1896, but actual distress was confined to a belt of country lying above the Western Ghats and comprising the Deccan and Southern Mahratta districts. There, as in Madras, relief works were opened in November 1896, and it was not till the beginning of November following that the attendance on them began to decrease sensibly, the famine coming to a close at the end of December 1897. In one district, however, *viz.*, Sholapur, it has been necessary to keep open relief works and to give gratuitous assistance up to the present time.

Bengal.

11. In Bengal relief operations on a large scale were confined to the densely-populated province of Behar, though certain portions of the Presidency and Bhagulpore Divisions and a small tract in the Orissa division were also affected. Relief commenced in Bengal in November 1896. Favoured by good rain and satisfactory crop prospects the general contraction of relief operations made steady progress during August 1897; and in September and October all famine operations were brought to a close.

*North-Western
Provinces and Oudh.*

12. The North-Western Provinces and Oudh cover an area of 107,500 square miles, and according to the last census contain a population of nearly 47 millions. In the words of the Resolution issued by Sir Antony MacDonnell at the termination of the famine:—"At one period or other during 1896 and 1897 every part of this great territory was to a greater or less extent affected by crop failure, entailing scarcity of food or high prices. In one-third of the area there was famine; in another third there was scarcity; and in the remainder there was the pressure which famine prices cause." In two well-marked areas distress was exceptionally severe. The first included the districts known as the Bundelkhand Districts of the Allahabad Division, and the second included Central and Southern Oudh. The general famine in these Provinces may be said to have begun in October 1896. At the end of that month over 51,000 persons were in receipt of relief, by the end of May 1897 the number had reached 1,389,978, but after that the numbers fell off considerably and relief operations were practically terminated by the middle of September.

Punjab.

13. In the Punjab relief operations were undertaken in nine districts, but severe famine, such as visited the worst parts of the North-Western and Central Provinces, was present, perhaps, in one district alone, *viz.*, Hissar. Relief works were opened in the affected districts at different periods between November 1896, and January 1897; the

maximum daily number on relief at no time exceeded 128,000, and by the September following all need of relief had ceased.

14. All the eighteen districts into which the Central Provinces are divided were affected by the drought and its consequences. In the Vindhyan districts of Saugor and Damoh, and in the Northern or Vindhyan half of the Jubbulpur district distress was acute among the hill aborigines, and there was also considerable distress among the agriculturists in the open country. In the wheat growing valley of the Nerbudda, comprising the southern half of Jubbulpore, Hoshangabad Narsinghpore and Nagpore, the failure of the autumn crop coupled with other causes created wide-spread distress. In the districts of the Satpura Plateau distress was also severe, while in the northern half of the Raipur district, the whole of the Bilaspur district and three-fourths of the Bhandara district, the situation was equally serious. Relief works were opened in November when there were 15,162 persons employed on them. The numbers continued to increase until in May 1897 there were over 691,000 on relief. There was no diminution before the middle of October, and it was not until the end of December that all relief was finally closed.

Central Provinces.

15. The famine in Burma cannot in respect either of the area affected or the population relieved compare with that experienced in other parts of India. The affected area comprised the whole of one district (Meiktila) and parts of two others (Yamethin and Myingyan). Relief was opened in November 1896, but at no time during the famine did the numbers on relief exceed 35,000, and by the middle of November all relief had closed.

Burma.

16. In Berar, although the whole Province was in some degree affected, the areas in which actual famine existed were the Melghat taluk of the Ellichpur district in which the distress was intense, the Akola district and the Malkapur taluk of the Buldana district in which distress was severe, and the rest of the Buldana district and the Basim district in which it was slight. In the Amraoti and Wun districts and in the plain taluks of the Ellichpur district there was distress from high prices. In the Melghat taluk works were opened at the end of December 1896, but in the other districts concerned the need for them did not arise till the end of February and the beginning of March 1897. The number on works never exceeded 38,000, and all relief operations were practically closed by the end of September.

Berar.

17. In the Native States the affected area embraced the Bikanir, Bhartpur and Dholpur States in Rajputana, and in Central India the northern districts of the Gwalior State and virtually all the States (of which Rewa is the largest) forming the Baghelkhand and Bundelkhand Agencies, and lying between British Bundelkhand to the north and the Jubbulpur Division of the Central Provinces to the south. In the Deccan a considerable tract of country forming the south-western angle of the Hyderabad State and lying between the Madras districts of Kurnool and Bellary and the Bombay districts of Dharwar and Bijapur, was also affected. North of the Godavari River partial failure of crops occurred in the Bastar and Feudatory States

Native States.

in the Chattisgarh District of the Central Provinces. It was, however, in Central India and especially in the Bundelkhand and Bhagelkhand groups of States that the failure of the rain crops and the deficiency of the cold weather showers were greatest, and the distress most general and severe. In the Native States as in British Provinces relief works were started in December 1896 and were continued till October 1897, when the famine in the States may be said to have ceased.

Measures of relief.

18. In coping with the calamity which befell the country in 1897 the hands of the provincial Governments were stronger than at any previous period. Since the last great famine of 1876-78, the irrigated area in which crops are reasonably secure and for which returns exist, has increased by 17 per cent., and the area watered from large works constructed by the State from 7 to 10 million acres, while some 5 million acres are watered from smaller works under Government control. In 1877 less than 9,000 miles of railway were open, in 1897 the mileage exceeded 20,000, and nothing in the experience of the year 1897 was more striking than the freedom with which grain passed from place to place in accordance with fluctuations of prices, and the manner in which the prices of food staples maintained a general level throughout large tracts, in parts of which the harvests were excellent. The measures applied by the local Governments for the relief of distress were briefly—the opening of works; the establishment of kitchens for the gratuitous distribution of cooked food; the distribution of gratuitous relief in other forms; the employment of weavers at their own trade; the remission or postponement of the collection of land revenue; the grant of advances for irrigational and other agricultural improvements, and for the purchase of seed grain, cattle and fodder; the opening of forest reserves for free grazing; special measures for the relief of jungle tribes; grants from the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund; and private charity. The degree of promptness and care with which these measures were taken in the different provinces varied as was inevitable in the case of operations of such magnitude; but it may fairly be said that in no former famine has relief been so extensive or so effective.

The Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund.

19. At the end of 1896, when the gravity of the situation could no longer be doubted, it was apparent that private charity in the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India was prepared to come to the help of the famine stricken. The Government of India lost no time in informing the Secretary of State of the policy they proposed to adhere to in accepting contributions from outside sources, of the objects to which the funds would be devoted, and of the organization to be arranged for the efficient control and administration of subscriptions. A public meeting at which Lord Elgin presided was held in Calcutta on the 14th January 1897 to invite subscriptions for the formation of a charitable fund. A Central Committee, with Sir Francis Maclean, the Chief Justice of Bengal, as Chairman, and Committees in each Province, were appointed. Colonel J. W. Ottley, C.I.E., R.E., was appointed Honorary Secretary to the Central Committee, but had subsequently, owing to ill-health, to resign his appointment. He was succeeded by Mr. H. E. M. James, C.S.I., Commissioner of Sindh, whose services were lent to

the committee for the purpose by the Government of India. Some idea of the liberality with which contributions were made to the Indian Famine Commission Relief Fund may be gathered from the fact that, from the time of its inception to the 30th January 1898, the receipts of the Fund amounted to no less than Rs. 1,70,00,000. The fund has been wound up with a credit balance of nearly seven lakhs of rupees, which has been invested as the nucleus of a fund for use in future famines. Rules for the custody and disposal of this unspent balance have recently been approved by the Government of India.

20. In the early stages of the famine it was brought to the notice of the Government of India that there was some risk of relief works failing to properly test the existence of distress by being conducted on too easy conditions. The importance of making the task one which no person would willingly perform in exchange for the famine wage unless impelled thereto by want, was impressed upon local Governments, who were directed to remind their officers of the importance of this principle. *Enaction of a full task on relief works.*

21. A not unimportant concession, sanctioned by the Government of India at the instance of the Government of Bengal at the commencement of the famine, was the remission under certain conditions of the whole of the duties chargeable under the Indian Stamp Act (I of 1879) on instruments executed for securing the repayment on loans made by landlords to their tenants and others in connection with the prevailing distress. *Remission of stamp duty.*

22. Early in 1897 the Government of India took the opportunity to lay down certain principles to be observed by local Governments in dealing with applications for agricultural loans in connection with the scarcity. These were:—that no money should be made available for the purposes of ordinary land improvement as distinct from the relief of distress; that such advances should therefore be made only in tracts in which relief is required and spent in wages to those for whom it would otherwise be necessary to provide relief in some other form; that all such advances should be treated as “famine relief” expenditure; and that only such portion should be recovered as roughly represent the value of work done, the excess cost, due to the relief of distress, being borne by the State. *Principles for dealing with agricultural advances.*

23. A memorandum embodying the leading principles for regulating expenditure upon Public Works in time of famine was also communicated to local Governments early in the same year. *Regulation of Public Works expenditure in time of famine.*

24. In the early stages of the famine the idea seems to have gained currency that the Government intended to enter the market as a purchaser of grain, and overtures were made by mercantile houses for the purchase of grain on behalf of the State for the affected Provinces. This fact, coupled with the expression by the Government of Bengal of misgivings as to the ability of private trade to supply the food wants of the Province without Government intervention, induced the Government of India to declare their policy in this important matter. In the beginning of January 1897 *Government and the grain trade. Policy of non-intervention.*

they let it be publicly known that, although they recognised the grave possibility that in certain circumstances the food supply of the country taken as a whole might prove insufficient, and that it might require to be supplemented by importations from abroad, they held that even in that event the best policy was that of rigid abstention from interference with the machinery of mercantile trade. "The Governor General in Council," they wrote, "believes that the intervention of Government as a purchaser or importer would do infinitely more harm than good as it would cripple and discourage the agency which is best able to gauge the need, which is impelled by self-interest to anticipate it, and which alone is best able to supply it effectively." To the Government of Bengal a general permission was accorded to make such arrangements as were desirable to meet the wants of certain special tracts without further reference to the Government of India. The Government of India followed up the public pronouncement of their policy regarding the grain trade with an important despatch to the Secretary of State, in which they reviewed exhaustively the position of the country with regard to food-stocks and reiterated the views already made public by them at the beginning of the year.

*Railway projects
as relief works*

25. The question of the possible utilisation of railway projects as relief works came early under the attention of the Government of India, and certain local Governments were informed that, if necessary, the Government of India would be prepared to sanction the carrying out of the earth-work of certain projects on the understanding that this did not pledge them to any decision regarding the completion of the lines. The extent, however, to which railway projects were utilized as relief works does not appear to have been very great. In Bombay the earthwork of the Pandharpur-Sangola extension of the Barsi Light Railway was undertaken as a relief work; in the Central Provinces the construction of the Saugor-Katni extension of the Indian Midland Railway and the earthwork of the Raipur-Dhamtari Tramway in Raipur afforded considerable employment for a time; in the Punjab a small quantity of the earth-work of the Delhi-Agra Chord Railway was the only railway work actually undertaken as a relief work; in Bengal the Bettiah-Bagaha and Sakri-Jainagar Railway earth-works gave some employment; in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh the only railways on which work was executed were the extension of the Oudh and Rohilkhund and the Bengal and North-Western Railways, which had been in progress before the famine set in. Work on some other projects had been contemplated but for one reason and another was not carried out. In Burma the earth-work of the Meiktila-Myingyan Railway was undertaken as a relief work.

*Employment of
Military officers on
famine duty.*

26. A noticeable feature of the famine of 1897 was the extent to which the services of Military officers were made available for famine relief duty in the several Provinces. In Bombay the services of two Royal Engineer officers were placed at the disposal of the local Government; in Bengal sixteen Military officers, a large number of European Non-commissioned officers, and some Native

officers, were employed in the supervision of civil relief works; similarly in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh eight Royal Engineer officers and 17 Staff Corps officers were employed; while in the Central Provinces the number of such officers engaged on famine duty was at one time over 30. The deputation of these officers was arranged through the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, and all local Governments have testified to the value of the services rendered by them.

27. Early in May 1897 the Government of India informed local Governments that they were anxious to collate for future guidance the experience gained during the famine in the conduct of relief works, and had decided to depute for a short time an officer with special qualifications to visit the provinces in which relief works were in progress, to inspect typical works and to make such enquiries as he found necessary. The officer selected was Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, in the Public Works Department. He visited Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and the Central Provinces, and submitted reports on his tour of inspection in each province. The Punjab was not visited, but a report was also submitted on relief works in that province, which Mr. Higham prepared from information obtained from the local officers. Mr. Higham's reports were forwarded to each of the local Governments concerned for an expression of their views. In a final report Mr. Higham made certain recommendations, based on a comparison of the different methods of relief works which came under his notice, and on a consideration of the extent to which the relief work system embodied in the famine codes had in practice proved efficacious and economical. This report was forwarded to the local Governments for their opinions, and in the covering Resolution and in a further circular issued at the same time, they were also asked to submit their proposals for the amendment of the Famine Codes. Reports have been received from all Governments except Madras on the subject of Mr. Higham's recommendations.

Deputation of Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., to inspect famine relief works.

28. At the close of the famine, the Government of India decided, with the approval of the Secretary of State, to appoint a small Commission to formulate for future guidance the lessons gained from the famine experience of 1897. The duties allotted to the Commission were—

Appointment of a Famine Commission.

- (1) to examine the manner in which the provisions of the Famine Codes of the several provinces differ from one another and in which their prescriptions have been departed from;
- (2) to inquire into the degree of success which has in each case attended the measures adopted, considered primarily with regard to the relief of distress and the saving of human life, and secondarily with regard to economy;
- (3) to advise as to the measures and methods of working which seem likely to prove most effective in these two respects; and

- (4) to make any enquiries and record any recommendations or opinions which it is thought will prove useful in the case of future famines.

The Commission which was formally appointed on the 8th January 1898, was constituted as follows :—*President*:—Sir J. B. Lyall, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab; *Members*:—Surgeon-Colonel Richardson, lately Inspector General of Civil Hospitals, North-Western Provinces and Oudh; Mr. T. W. Holderness, C.S.I., I.C.S., lately Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Revenue and Agriculture (Famine); Mr. T. Higham, C.I.E., Inspector General of Irrigation and Joint Secretary to the Government of India, in the Public Works Department, and Rai Bahadur Bipin Krishna Bose, M.A., B.L., C.I.E., Government Advocate, Nagpur. Mr. H. J. McIntosh, I.C.S., was appointed Secretary to the Commission. The months of January to March were spent in touring in the affected Provinces and taking oral evidence. At the beginning of April the Commission arrived at Simla to prepare their report. The Commission practically dissolved in the middle of July, Dr. Richardson returning to England, Messrs. Higham and Bose to their respective appointments, while Mr. Holderness' services were placed at the disposal of the Government of India for appointment as Secretary in the Department of Revenue and Agriculture. The report has recently been received by the Government of India, and will have to be taken into consideration at an early date.

Leave concessions to officers employed on famine duty.

29. At the close of the famine the Government of India, with the approval of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, sanctioned certain leave concessions to officers who were employed on duties connected with famine relief. These were as follows :—

- (i) to officers who have been so employed for a period of not less than five months—
 - either (a) one month's extra privilege leave,
 - or (b) full pay instead of half pay for the first two months' of furlough or other leave for which half pay is ordinarily admissible.
- (ii) to officers so employed for a period of not less than ten months—
 - either (a) two months' extra privilege leave,
 - or (b) full pay instead of half pay for the first four months' of furlough or other leave as above.

These concessions were to be granted subject to certain explanations and limitations.

Strengthening of the Revenue and Agricultural Secretariat on account of the Famine. Preliminary Report on the Famine.

30. In closing this chapter mention should be made of the fact that in consequence of the pressure of work caused by the famine it was found necessary to strengthen the Department of Revenue and Agriculture by the addition of a temporary Deputy Secretary, and Mr. T. W. Holderness, Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh in the Scarcity Department, was appointed with effect from the 18th January 1897. His employment lasted

till November 1897 when his services were replaced at the disposal of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh Government. The famine work of the Secretariat was entirely in his hands. Before the conclusion of his deputation Mr. Holderness prepared a preliminary report on the famine operations of the year, upon which the Government of India issued an important Resolution at the end of 1897, which was published in the *Gazette of India* for general information.

Principal papers referred to :—

Circular No. 18, dated 18th September 1895.

Despatch No. 64, dated 23rd December 1896, to Secretary of State.

Circular No. 1, dated 22nd December 1896.

Circular No. 3, dated 24th December 1896.

Circular No. 11, dated 8th February 1897.

Circular No. 4, dated 6th January 1897.

Despatch No. 33, dated 18th May 1897, to Secretary of State.

Resolution No. 5047, dated 15th November 1897.

Despatch No. 86, dated 25th November 1897, to Secretary of State.

Resolution No. 35, dated 23rd December 1897.

Resolution No. 36, dated 30th December 1897.

CHAPTER IV.

LAND REVENUE ASSESSMENT.

*Term of settlements
and Progressive
Assessments.*

31. Amongst the more important matters which had engaged the attention of Lord Lansdowne's administration was the question of guarding the State Revenue against loss in cases where at the time of revision settlement it was found that "the wealth of proprietors had grown so fast that the full share due to the State could not be taken from them suddenly without causing embarrassment." In 1891 the views of the Government of India were communicated to the Secretary of State in a despatch in which the relation of the State to the land, as accepted by Lord Lansdowne, was set forth and the principles governing the assessment of land revenue in the Central Provinces and other parts of India were explained. The Secretary of State's reply to this despatch was taken to indicate acquiescence in the principles and policy thus enunciated, and a Resolution was issued to local Governments and Administrations in which it was laid down that the difficulties in question were to be met by the adoption either of a system of progressive enhancements or of shorter term of settlement. This Resolution was forwarded to the Secretary of State for communication to Madras and Bombay whose settlement administration is under his direct control. The immediate result was a despatch received shortly before Lord Lansdowne left in which objection was taken by the Secretary of State to any restriction of the term of settlement without further knowledge of the opinion of the local Governments and of the people. Accordingly one of the first acts of Lord Elgin's administration was to invite an expression of the views of the Governments of Bengal, the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, the Punjab, and of the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, these being the Provinces more immediately concerned, on the points discussed by the Secretary of State, with especial reference to the term for which settlements should be ordinarily made, and the system of progressive assessments. Attention was also directed to certain subsidiary points with the view of ascertaining—

- (1) the extent to which objections to a sudden enhancement of revenue had led within recent years to a relinquishment of what otherwise might and would have been claimed by the State ;
- (2) how far past practice had given rise to a reasonable expectation on the part of the people that the term of future settlements would be not less than 30 years ;
- (3) whether the system of maintaining records-of-rights afforded an argument in favour of shorter term settlements ;
- (4) whether any connection was suggested as existing between the term of settlement and indebtedness among the proprietors or privileged tenants.

32. Replies were received in due course representing the opinion not only of the local Governments and Administrations concerned, but of a large body of experienced officers, and an important despatch was

addressed to the Secretary of State, Mr. Fowler, in 1895. In this despatch the position of the Government of India and the objections of the Secretary of State were summarised. It was pointed out that the scope of the policy which the Government of India desired to enforce had apparently been somewhat misapprehended and that no “general or wide” departure from existing practice, no “general shortening of the term of settlement” now usual, no “material changes in the land revenue system” were contemplated. The presumption was in each case to be in favour of existing practice, and it was only in those cases where it was apparent that to adhere to that practice would be “likely to involve material loss to the State” or to “entail any risk of serious loss” that a departure from it was suggested. It was further explained that progressive assessments were to be framed with regard to actual, not prospective assets. After considering carefully Lord Kimberley’s arguments and the views of local Governments the Government of India expressed the opinion that the policy previously explained was sound. Briefly their argument was as follows :—

“Repeated concessions in favour of the owners of land have reduced the share of the profits of land which is demanded by the State. If that share is still too high (which we do not admit), it should again be reduced. But it is our bounden duty, as guardians of the public interests to ensure that the State share, at whatever level it may be fixed, shall be as far as possible taken in full; or if not taken in full, that the reasons for leniency shall be fully stated, carefully considered, and adjudged to be sufficient in each case. Under certain conditions it is impossible to take that share in full by revisions of demand recurring after long intervals, without incurring administrative and even political evils which are greater than those which would ensue from reasonable curtailment of the intervals. Where, therefore, those conditions exist special measures are called for.”

The whole situation was reviewed with the object of showing that some of the objections commonly urged against shorter as opposed to longer terms had lost much of their force whilst the weight of others might be easily exaggerated. It was pointed out that in many cases a long term of settlement necessarily involved the relinquishment of revenue to which the State was entitled, and that under certain conditions a shorter might have positive advantages over a longer term of settlement in the interests of the people and even of the revenue payers themselves. In developing the latter portion of the case presented, some stress was laid on the fact that, subject to local exceptions throughout Northern India, the payers of land revenue are not “the people”.....“the true people whose prosperity and contentment must always be on every ground the first care of the Government of India,”—but a body of more or less large landlords who are entitled to be treated with fairness, who have always been treated with consideration, but have small claims to leniency. The despatch concluded :—

“Finally, we would wish to guard ourselves against misapprehension.

“We recognise to the full the great importance of fixing the demand for reasonably long periods, and thus giving to the people certainty and quietude and saving them from disturbance and unrest. We recognise to the full the absolute necessity for moderation in the assessment of our land revenue, especially when

it is paid by the people, and not by a small class only. But we have been replying to a despatch in which we are pressed (as we understand it) to lengthen our term and to restrict the normal growth of our demand; and as we are unable to concur in the advisability of such action, we have naturally dwelt upon the considerations which tell against it. In arguing against longer terms, however, we must not be understood to argue against reasonably long terms; while opposing what seems to us to be unnecessary leniency, we would not be thought to underestimate the importance of moderation."

The Secretary of State's attitude.

33. The Secretary of State, Lord George Hamilton, in reply raised no objection to the view that terms of 30 years and 20 years, respectively, should be adhered to in cases where they had heretofore been the ordinary term, but reiterated his predecessor's disapproval of the policy of reducing one or the other term in tracts where it had heretofore been enjoyed, merely on the ground that the revenue authorities found it inexpedient to impose the full enhancement. He considered that the views of the Government of India as to progressive enhancements were in accordance with those expressed by Lord Kimberley and raised no objection to any increase in the current land revenue in excess of a certain percentage being spread over the first few years of a settlement.

Instructions to local Governments.

34. A circular was accordingly addressed to all local Governments and Administrations (except Madras and Bombay) summarising the orders as to the term of settlement to be adopted in future, and the method of progressive assessment, and desiring with reference to the first question that the settlements which had been announced during the past 5 years should be considered, and that where the normal term had been shortened the fact should be justified on the principles indicated, or proposals made to extend the term.

The Tanjore Settlement.

35. In the meantime the term of settlement in the Tanjore district of Madras had come under consideration on the introduction of a revision settlement, and Lord Wenlock's Government had asked the Secretary of State's sanction to fix the duration at 20 years instead of 30 years which had been the general rule in the Presidency. In reply Lord George Hamilton referred to the despatch which he had addressed to the Government of India. The Madras Government thereupon asked for an interpretation of a statement in the despatch to the effect that a reduction of the term of settlement to 20 years cannot be justified "if the previous practice has given rise to a reasonable expectation that the term of 30 years will be maintained." The Government of India replied that the question must be decided separately for each district on a review of the facts, and that they did not feel themselves in a position to attempt a definition of the class of facts which might be held to give rise to such a reasonable expectation. The Government of Madras on consideration felt that they were precluded from again recommending that the term of settlement in the Tanjore district should be less than 30 years, and in this view the Government of India and the Secretary of State concurred.

Ryotwari Provinces. Madras and Bombay.

36. As regards the Ryotwari Provinces Lord Elgin's Administration has continued to urge on the Government of Bombay the necessity for the speedy completion of the initial settlements which will

form the permanent basis of future settlements, and although the local Government has found it impossible to fulfil its promises to the letter, the close of operations and the final abolition of the special Survey Department are at length within measurable distance. Attention has been directed to questions connected with the settlement of the Malabar district in Madras, more especially to those arising from the unsatisfactory character of the existing relations of landlord and tenant in that district. This question will be further referred to in the appropriate chapter. With reference to Berar settlements which are based on the Bombay system, the Government of India have impressed on the local Administration the advisability of restricting enhancements at the time of revision within the limits adhered to in Bombay. The Province of Coorg has been brought under a summary settlement for ten years from the year 1893-97.

*Berar.**Coorg.*

37. The inception of revision settlement operations in Lower Burma has afforded an opportunity for reconsidering the manner and degree of control to be exercised by the Government of India over settlement operations in Burma, and the principles by which revision settlement officers are to be guided. In a letter addressed to the local Government in 1897, the position of the Governor General in Council was thus defined : "He wishes, as in the case of the Punjab, the North-Western Provinces and the Central Provinces, to lay down broad principles in consultation with the local Government, and to leave their application to that Government, only securing to himself the opportunity of assuring himself that they are being followed, or, if set aside, that there is sufficient reason for departing from them, before any action has been taken which commits the Government." The local Government has shown every desire to meet Lord Elgin's wishes, and assessment instructions have been drawn up which prescribe the procedure to be followed for securing the degree of control desired by the Government of India, and define the principles on which the government share of the produce is to be assessed. The basis and limitations of the assessment and the ordinary duration of the term of settlement have been determined, whilst the value of rental statistics as a check on results deduced by the settlement officer from his calculation of net profits has been fully recognised.

Lower Burma.

38. In order that the problem to be dealt with in Upper Burma may be understood, a brief account of the state of affairs in that portion of the province under Burman rule is necessary. There were two classes of land, State land and private land. The private land which had been acquired in various manners was held by individuals in heritable and proprietary right and ordinarily paid nothing in the shape of rent or land revenue, though it paid for water and, in certain districts, rent or land revenue at reduced rates. All other land belonged to the State and paid rent. In addition to rent and land revenue "thathameda" was levied. This was a rough income tax which was supposed to absorb about a tithe of each man's income. A lump assessment on each village was fixed at an all round rate upon households and distributed over the component households by a local *panchayat* of assessors called *thamadis* in

Upper Burma settlements.

rough accordance with the means of each household. The owners and cultivators of land ordinarily paid *thathameda* like other people, but in some districts the cultivators of State land were allowed a rebate in proportion to the amount of rent which they paid. This system has in all essential respects continued in force under British rule, and the present law (Upper Burma Land Revenue Regulation, III of 1889) merely declares that—

- (1) State lands pay rent;
- (2) private lands pay revenue;
- (3) all lands irrigated from Government works pay water rate.

*The policy of
Government.*

39. In 1894 directions to settlement officers were framed which indicated the object to be attained. This, stated broadly, was to attach revenue and rent rates to the soil and to transfer the *thathameda* tax to the land. It was not expected that this measure could be carried out at once or otherwise than tentatively after many experiments, but it was hoped that in time fixity of demand with reasonable elasticity to provide for vicissitudes of season would be obtained. In the meantime the assessments fixed were to be for short terms only and were to be continually revised in the light of growing knowledge, until some satisfactory basis for a long term settlement should be arrived at. The problem presented many difficulties, and the upshot of a series of discussions terminating in a Conference held at Rangoon was a proposal made in 1896 by Sir Frederic Fryer for the entire abolition of *thathameda* and the substitution for it of a capitation tax such as is levied in Lower Burma, combined with the assessment of private lands to land revenue. The whole subject was exhaustively considered by the Government of India, and in the present year an important letter was addressed to the local Government in which a doubt was expressed whether matters were yet ripe for any decisive action which would bind Government irrevocably for the future to a change so far-reaching as that proposed. As regards the *thathameda* it was said:—

“The conclusions to which a careful study of the papers leads them are as follow:—

- (a) No tax of the nature of *thathameda* can ever be an effective means of securing to Government that share of the produce of land which it may claim as its due. An assessment of land revenue is based upon cultivated area, which is a measurable fact, capable of exact ascertainment. The assessment of *thathameda* is based upon an estimate of income, which must be mainly a matter of opinion. The former expands automatically with the extension of cultivation, and secures to Government its proper share to what is the principal form of wealth in this country; while under a suitable system, such as obtains in Upper Burma, it fluctuates also with the variation of the seasons, and so adjusts the burden to the means of bearing it. The latter depends wholly upon population, which does not necessarily vary with the cultivated area; while the total demand, at any rate, does not change with the nature of the season, so that it must be so low that it can be paid in a bad year.
- (b) *Thathameda*, as at present levied, is exceedingly unequal in its incidence upon one town or village as compared with another, and this because

it is levied at one uniform rate per household throughout a district, so that a poor family living in a village which includes many rich families will pay only a small fraction of what it would have to pay if they were absent.

- (c) On the other hand, the distribution of the *thathameda* as among the component families of each individual village is exceedingly equitable—far more so than any assessment would be which Government itself could frame; and infinitely more so than an all-round capitation tax.
- (d) Considered from this last point of view, its main defect is that there is a tendency to tax unskilled labour too highly. Probably it is open to the same criticism to which all Government assessments are open—that the assessing officer is afraid to go high enough on the rich or low enough on the poor, whether persons or lands.

“In such matters the feeling of the Government of India is strongly in favour of leaving the people to manage their own affairs so far as this is possible, since they can do it infinitely better for themselves than Government can do it for them. The change from the indigenous panchayat system, with all its elasticity and adaptation to varying circumstances in the light of intimate local knowledge, to our comparatively rigid and mechanical system of taxation, is probably inevitable in the end. But at least Government should do nothing to hurry it. So long as the favouritism which always accompanies the indigenous system is kept within such bounds that the people do not complain, it may safely be concluded that they think it a cheap price to pay for the permission to make their own distribution.”

A rough scheme was suggested under which land revenue would be assessed on all land, though the rates on State and private land would be differentiated, and the *thathameda* would be retained, but its incidence upon agricultural incomes would be reduced by a rough system of rebate. In making proposals recently for the resettlement of the district of Minbu in Upper Burma the local Government has in a great measure accepted the correctness of the Government of India's views and it seems probable that the problem is now in a fair way of solution.

40. In Assam temporary revision of the old settlement has been proceeded with on the lines approved by Lord Lansdowne's Government, that is, summary ten years' settlements (in every case but that of the Jaintia Parganahs where the term has been fixed at 15 years) have been effected “at rates which, though resulting in a considerable enhancement, are intrinsically light.” The means for effecting during the next decade a “satisfactory classification of soils and lands which may serve at the end of the ten years as a permanent basis of all future settlements” have continued to receive attention. The necessity for a proper differentiation of soils according to their value, to which rates can be applied on general considerations affecting groups of villages or assessment circles has been urged on the local Administration. And whilst it has been recognised that, for the present at any rate, no such minute discrimination of soils and elaboration of rates as are adopted in Bombay will be required in Assam, too broad a classification has been deprecated as perpetuating inequality of assessment. In the present year a suggestion has been made that a system based on that adopted in the Central Provinces would meet the peculiar circumstances of the province.

Assam.

*North-Western
Provinces and Oudh.*

41. Turning to the temporarily-settled zamindari provinces, revision settlements have been in progress both in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and it is satisfactory to find that it has been possible to base the new assessments in a great measure on existing maps and records, and to carry out the settlements without any elaborate or harassing operations. A revised code of settlement rules has been introduced for districts in which settlements are not accompanied by a new cadastral survey, and the procedure connected with the general control of the imperial Government in the matter of assessments has been revised on lines already adopted in the Punjab. The Government of India are now enabled to fix beforehand the general principles on which settlement operations are to be conducted instead of, as formerly, only reviewing those operations when reported for sanction after their conclusion. It has been found necessary to deprecate the tendency on the part of settlement officers to secure leniency of assessment, which special circumstances often justify, by understating the assets. The Government of India fully recognize the need of moderation, but they have pointed out that such considerations come in after the assets have been ascertained as accurately as possible. Lord Elgin's administration has further continued to urge the necessity of maintaining the standard of assessment in these Provinces at 50 per cent. of the assets, and of fully justifying all departures from that standard. An important step towards securing efficient maintenance of land-records has been taken in the strengthening of the local establishment by the deputation of officers of the Imperial Survey. The advisability of organizing a system on similar lines and extending it to all provinces is under consideration.

Central Provinces.

42. For the Central Provinces also important instructions have issued as to the degree of control to be exercised by the Government of India over settlement operations, and as to the stage at which assessment proposals should be submitted to them. The limit of percentage of net assets to be taken has been fixed, and the necessity of securing a fair share to the State within those limits has been urged on the local Administration. Assessment instructions have been formulated under the direction of the Government of India not only for the guidance of the Administration and its officers as to the principles of assessment, but also in order to indicate to the Secretary of State and the public the lines which will be followed.

Punjab.

43. The only important question that has come up for consideration in connection with Punjab settlements during the period under review is that of the manner in which the comparison of present standard rates with past prices is to be applied as a check on the half-assets estimate framed by settlement officers at the time of revision. The question was whether the past prices used for this purpose should be those which preceded the assessment under revision, or the prices which had prevailed during any considerable portion of its currency and by which its working had been actually tested. The Government of India in addressing the Punjab Government in 1895 considered that both comparisons should be made and used concurrently as checks upon one another and upon the half-assets estimate.

44. The assessment and settlement of the important division of Orissa in Bengal have been practically completed during Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty. In 1897 an important letter was addressed to the Government of Bengal in which the views of the Government of India on the various questions arising in connection with the settlement were stated. The rules for the settlement of rents fixed by the Government of Bengal were accepted, though the necessity of a careful consideration of the question with a view to a more effective plan of operations at the next revision was indicated. The idea of a permanent settlement was disposed of as "formally abandoned" and the term of settlement was considered. Other matters dealt with were the patwari cess, the State's theoretical share of the assets, the pitch of the present assessment, the patwari system and the record-of-rights; whilst the consideration of the question of imposing owners' rates for irrigation was deferred for the present. This letter was forwarded to the Secretary of State with a despatch, and Lord George Hamilton in reply accepted the instructions generally. He agreed to the proposals as to enhancement of assessment and the Government's share of the assets, only repeating the principle that "any theoretical rights of the State, and even the increase of the revenue, must be held second to the contentment of the people." He was unable, however, to concur in the view of the Government of Bengal, supported by the Government of India, that a 20-years settlement was expedient, and considered that no sufficient reason had been shown for departing from the ordinary term of 30 years. On the lines thus determined the settlement is being concluded.

Bengal.

45. A settlement has been effected for the Quetta Tahsil and is in progress in Pishin. Native States have continued to receive attention and a satisfactory settlement has been carried out in Tonk under the supervision of a Political Agent, who is also an experienced revenue officer, with the cordial co-operation of the Durbar. In Alwar and Bhartpur a settlement which promises the best results is being carried out by a settlement officer from the Punjab on the lines followed in that province.

Miscellaneous Settlements.

46. In 1895 rules were framed and sanctioned by the Secretary of State regulating the appointment of settlement officers and the allowances to be drawn by them. In submitting their recommendations Lord Elgin's Government said—

Appointment and remuneration of Settlement Officers.

"We propose . . . to act on the principle that settlement operations are as much a part of the regular work of Land Revenue Administration as any other duties connected with it, though the number of officers required at any one time for their conduct cannot be fixed beforehand; that the authority which has discretion to decide whether a settlement should be made should have discretion to decide also the less important question whether a special agency should be employed to make it; and that the Secretary of State having regulated the allowances to be drawn by such agency, no further reference to him should be necessary."

47. The principles which should be followed in the alienation and assessment of town sites which are the property of Government came under the consideration of the Government of India in 1894 and enquiries were made as to existing practice in the several provinces.

Assessment of Town-lands.

In 1895 an important Resolution on the subject was issued in which it was laid down that—

“The objects which these principles should secure are three-fold : *First*, that the grantee should in all cases acquire such security of tenure as to afford a sufficient inducement for the expenditure of capital in building and improvement ; *secondly*, that the source of revenue should in no case be permanently alienated, but that a rent should in all cases be fixed, subject to periodical revision ; and, *thirdly*, that the amount of rent to be taken at each revision should be subject to such limitations as may be necessary to secure the grantee in his property.”

The extent of the State rights in land in the town of Karachi has formed the subject of correspondence with the Bombay Government, and rules for the leasing of town lands in Assam and Upper Burma have been framed.

*Management of
nazul property in
the North-Western
Provinces and Oudh.*

48. Revised instructions and general rules for the management of *nazul* property in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh were submitted by the local Government in the present year and approved by the Government of India as “well calculated to place on a sound and regular system matters which are at present managed somewhat variously and on no settled principles.” Incidentally the question was raised whether Government can sell land which is its own, subject to the payment of a ground rent, or subject to restrictions as to the use to which the property is to be put. The law officers have held that Government can impose such restrictions, but consider that leases with appropriate conditions are preferable to sale in such cases, and the Government of India have expressed concurrence in this view.

*Redemption of
Land Revenue in the
case of land required
for dwelling houses,
factories, &c.*

49. Under orders contained in a despatch from the Secretary of State dated 9th July 1862, the power of redemption of land revenue at the discretion of local Governments was allowed in the case of land required for dwelling houses, factories, gardens, plantations, and other similar purposes. Action under the authority of these orders was, however, restricted by a circular of the Government of India of August 1872, which laid down that no land should be sold revenue-free in perpetuity without the sanction in each case of the Government of India, excepting only such small plots not exceeding 10 acres in extent as might be required for buildings or gardens. In 1895 a circular was addressed to local Governments and Administrations in which enquiry was made as to the action taken under these orders and the opinion was expressed that the right to redeem land revenue might be totally withdrawn. The replies showed that this opinion was justified as the right had been very seldom exercised and orders withdrawing it were issued in a Resolution of September 1897 with the following explanation :—

“These orders will not affect any powers already conferred on local Governments and Administrations to grant exemption from or reduction of land revenue in respect of lands acquired by or made over to local authorities for roads and other public purposes, or of lands made over conditionally for educational, charitable or other *quasi*-public purposes to societies or individuals. Nor will they affect the provisions of any rules in force locally in any province which permit the redemption of land revenue assessed on small *nazul* plots, where the trouble and expense of collecting the assessment are disproportionate to the amount. Nor will

they affect any rules already sanctioned for any province by the Government of India, authorising for the same reason the sale free-of-revenue of small Government properties which it may be necessary to sell."

The matter is only of importance as connected with the enforcement of the principle of the right of the State to share in the unearned increment, as opposed to the principle of a permanent land revenue settlement.

Principal papers referred to :—

Despatch No. 147, dated 23rd November 1893, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 33, dated 18th June 1895, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 117, dated 24th October 1895, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 75, dated 21st October 1897, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 20, dated 3rd February 1898, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 24, dated 19th May 1898, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 110, dated 23rd June 1898, from Secretary of State.

Resolution No. 21, dated 7th October 1895.

Resolution No. 12, dated 7th September 1897.

CHAPTER V.

COLLECTION OF LAND REVENUE.

*Elasticity of Col-
lection.*

50. In Chapter V of the summary of Lord Lansdowne's administration a sketch is given of the methods of collection under Native and British rule, respectively, and of the results which have followed from the want of elasticity which is a characteristic of the latter system. Lord Lansdowne, in a Minute, which is referred to elsewhere, indicated that one of the directions in which reforms having for their object the relief of the agricultural classes should be sought was "the introduction of a greater element of elasticity into our revenue system."

*Date of Instal-
ments.*

51. Apart from suspensions and remissions of land revenue relief may occasionally be given by careful readjustment of the dates of collection of instalments, and at the instance of the Government of India an enquiry on the point was in 1893 set on foot in Bombay with reference to the Deccan districts of that Presidency. It was found, however, that a general revision of the dates was neither necessary nor desirable and this conclusion the Government of India accepted. The same question has been considered with reference to Lower Burma, and more suitable dates have been fixed for collections in that portion of the Province. It has also been decided that suspensions in Lower Burma are rarely required and that no general rules are needed. The very special cases which may arise are to be treated exceptionally.

*Discussions with
local Governments.*

52. In September 1895 it was decided to depute Sir Edward Buck, Secretary to the Government of India in the Revenue Department, to confer with local Governments and Administrations with a view to ascertaining more definitely their views on the proposals and recommendations of the Agricultural Conference held at Simla in October 1893. It was recognised by the Secretary of State and the Government of India that Sir E. Buck's tour would afford a convenient opportunity of discussing the question of elasticity of demand with local Governments should they deem it advisable to do so. The latter were accordingly requested in a circular Resolution of the 7th of September 1895 to inform Sir E. Buck of their views so as to enable him to "advise the Supreme Government as to what measures in this direction are regarded as practicable or the reverse in each province." It cannot be said that the question was materially advanced by the discussions in the provincial conferences which followed. The general conclusion appears to be that it is practice and not rules that require reform, and that the practical end to be kept in view at present is the perfecting of the agency for giving early warning of agricultural distress or deterioration. The whole question will be further considered when the land transfer question has been disposed of.

*Suspensions and
Remissions.*

53. Turning to administration it is sufficient to say here that during the late famine very great leniency in the suspension and remission of the land revenue demand was shown in almost all the affected provinces with the full approval of the Government of India. The actual

remissions, involving a final sacrifice of revenue as distinguished from suspensions of revenue to be ultimately recovered, granted on account of the famine up to the present time, are as follows :—

			Rs.	Seasons.
North-Western Provinces and Oudh	...		58,91,132	1897-98
Central Provinces	...	...	28,68,763	{ 1895-96 to 1897-98
Bengal	...	...	2,05,698	1897-98
Madras	...	...	37,50,000	Ditto
Punjab	...	...	59,937	Ditto
Bombay (Sindh)	...	...	3,23,179	1897-98

A sum of Rs. 1,34,295 has also been remitted in Bengal on account of the damage done in Chittagong by the destructive cyclone and storm wave of the 24th October 1897.

54. The settlements of certain districts in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and the Punjab, in which there was reason to believe deterioration had taken place, have been re-examined and considerable permanent remissions have been granted. At the instance of the Government of India the Punjab Government has instructed its revenue officers to watch their districts carefully, and to bring promptly to notice the first signs of distress or deterioration with a view to the immediate grant of relief in the way of suspension or remission.

Revision of assessment in deteriorated tracts.

55. Provision has been made in the Central Provinces Tenancy Act of 1898 and in the Tenancy Bill now under consideration for Madras that remissions and suspensions of revenue shall be contingent on the exercise by the landlords of corresponding leniency towards their tenants in the matter of rent collection.

Suspension of rent-recovery.

56. In 1894 the attention of the Government of India was attracted by an order passed by a local Government which, while suspending the collection of land revenue on account of local distress due to abnormal rainfall, directed that the local rates should notwithstanding be realised as usual. The order appeared to conflict with the principle that the land revenue is the first charge on the land; and an enquiry was therefore instituted into the practice prevailing in the various provinces. The replies received showed that this varied greatly, and in 1895 a Resolution was issued in which the procedure to be followed in future was stated in the following terms:

Recovery of cesses where land revenue is suspended or remitted.

“3. The case to which the following remarks refer are those in which land revenue that is due under the terms of settlement, is suspended or remitted as a matter of grace, under exceptional circumstances, and to an amount which depends solely upon the pleasure of Government, and is not regulated by any fixed automatic rules. In such cases relief is given because the revenue payer is unable to bear the whole burden of the revenue together with the cesses. But, on the principle that land revenue is the first charge on the land, whatever portion of that burden he may be able to pay should be credited wholly to land revenue, no credit being made to cesses until the liability for land revenue has been completely discharged. To push this principle to its logical conclusion would be to lay down that no cess can be levied upon any unit of land revenue demand so long as any portion of it remains suspended, or if any portion of it has been remitted. The Government of India do not, however, desire to go so far as this. But they think that whenever the preferential claim of Government to its revenue is postponed

to the liability for cesses, it is proper that the necessity for such postponement should be considered and the reasons which justify it recorded."

"4 They request, therefore, that whenever it is proposed that a suspension or remission of land revenue which falls under the class discussed in the preceding paragraph should not carry with it a rateable suspension or remission of the cesses leviable upon land revenue, the reason why it is considered undesirable or unnecessary to interrupt the collection of the cesses may be recorded as a part of the order sanctioning the suspension or remission."

Principal papers referred to :—

Resolution No. 15, dated 7th September 1895.

CHAPTER VI.

RELATIONS OF LANDLORDS AND TENANTS.

57. The policy of strengthening by legislation the position of agricultural tenants has been actively pursued during Lord Elgin's Vice-royalty. The Bengal Tenancy Act has been amended, the Central Provinces Act has undergone revision and consolidation, a Tenancy Bill for the Madras Presidency has been introduced in the local Legislative Council, and a special Bill for Malabar has also been under preparation for introduction in that Council. *The Policy of Government.*

58. At the close of Lord Lansdowne's term of office the position as regards tenancy legislation for Madras was as follows. A Bill having been framed on the lines of the Bengal Act and submitted to the Government of India, Lord Lansdowne desired that the Madras Government should be told that the Bill must be closely examined with a view to strengthening the position of the tenant, before it could receive the assent of the Governor-General in Council, and proposed that the officer representing Madras on the Legislative Council at Calcutta should go through the Bill with a Bengal officer who had been closely associated with the construction of the Bengal Act. Subsequent to Lord Lansdowne's departure a reply was received from the Madras Government regretting the inability of the Governor in Council to accept the latter suggestion, and asking that the matter might lie over pending the further examination of the Bill by the local Government. In March 1894, an important letter was addressed to Madras in which the respects in which the Madras Bill appeared to the Government of India to fall short of requirements were indicated. The importance of measures to facilitate the growth of security of tenure and the acquisition of the right of occupancy, of provisions for the protection of under-tenants, of a clear definition of the classes and respective rights of ryots, and of provision for empowering the Government to make a survey, record-of-rights and settlement of any local area, was urged on the local Government; and the questions of restricting the free transfer of occupancy rights, of retaining rent suits under the jurisdiction of the Revenue Courts, and of the desirability of empowering farmers of public revenue to proceed against their sub-renters were suggested for further consideration. No reply was received until November 1897, when the Madras Government sent up a revised Bill. An examination of this Bill disclosed many points on which the Government of India were not precisely in accord with the Government of Madras. But the Governor-General in Council recognised the inexpediency of delaying legislation which had been under contemplation for over twelve years in order to bring under discussion views which did not present themselves when the Bill was sent up in 1894. Sanction to the introduction of the Bill into the local Legislative Council was therefore accorded by Lord Elgin, provided that modifications on the following four points of principle were accepted:—*firstly*, that a lease should not bar the acquisition by a tenant of the statutory right of occupancy under *Madras Tenancy Bill.*

the twelve-years rule; *secondly*, that non-occupancy rights should be declared non-transferable; *thirdly*, that land purchased from an occupancy tenant by a zamindar should not merge in the private land of the purchaser; and *fourthly*, that the section making the Code of Civil Procedure applicable to all rent suits tried by Collectors under the Act should be expunged, and a provision to the same effect, if thought necessary, be inserted as a sub-section of the section relating to procedure in suits before Collectors. Several other minor points were discussed in this letter of the Government of India, and a further communication was promised. This was sent in the May following, but the only matter dealt with was that referred to above as the fourth point of principle. The experience gained in other provinces, especially Bengal, of the unsuitability for settlement purposes of the procedure of the Civil Procedure Code was referred to, and the local Government was strongly advised as to the wisdom of taking power to lay down a simpler method of proceeding. The Madras Government accepted the main conditions and the Bill has since been introduced; but owing to the lamentable fatality which has deprived the Local Government of the services of the officer who drafted the Bill, and the Member of Council most intimately acquainted with its provisions, further delay seems likely to ensue before it is finally passed into law.

Tenancy Legislation for Malabar.

59. The unsatisfactory character of the relations of landlord and tenant in the Malabar District of the Madras Presidency has long occupied the attention of Government. The Moplahs, a large and ever increasing section of the community composed of converts to Islam from all castes, have repeatedly shown their dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs by agrarian outbreaks, of which there were 52 between 1852 and 1885 and one as lately as 1896. Though the fanatical character of the Moplahs had much to do with these outbreaks, it is recognised that the tenant question is at the root of the discontent.

The main grievances brought to notice are these :—

- (i) the landlord's power to eject on payment of inadequate rates of compensation for improvements.
- (ii) the excessive number of evictions.
- (iii) the interference of landlords with cultivators settled by Government on waste lands.
- (iv) the extortionate rents and renewal fees charged.
- (v) the want of any means for preventing new enhancements of revenue from falling on the cultivator.

To remedy the grievances connected with the question of compensation Madras Act I of 1887 was passed, which required that the market value of the improvements should be paid to the outgoing tenant and permitted the Government to issue tables of rates which should be presumed to be the proper rates until the contrary was proved. The Act also empowered Government to issue rules regarding the appointment of assessors to fix the compensation. On the whole the Act has proved a failure. It has raised the average compensation paid but not sufficiently. It has entirely failed to check evictions.

and contains no provision for the protection of ryots planted out in excess zamindari waste. Accordingly in 1894 the Madras Government came up with proposals for a revision of this Act and the tables of rates, for a Registration Act on the lines of Bengal Act VII of 1876, for an Act to declare that the Madras Act VIII of 1865 (Rent Recovery Act) should not apply to Malabar and the Wynaad, and for granting landlords the same power of distraint through the Courts which the zamindars in Bengal have under Chapter XII of the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885. The Government of India agreed as to the necessity for legislation and the general lines to be followed, but thought that the procedure for ascertaining the person really liable for the payment of revenue might be more summary than in Bengal. As regards the last proposal they asked the Madras Government to consider whether any provision for distraint was required at all. A further letter was addressed to the Madras Government shortly after, in which the local Government was urged to take up the general question of a Tenancy Law for Malabar, while not delaying the special legislation referred to above and the revision of Act I of 1887, and the tables framed under it. A serious Moplah outbreak which occurred in East Ernad in February and March 1896, and resulted in considerable loss of life, led the Government of India to again urge on the Government of Madras the importance of speedy action and of immediate revision of the tables under Act I of 1887. "The root of the evil," it was said, "can be reached only by comprehensive legislation; but there seems no reason why the partial remedy for which the existing law provides should not at least be made as effectual as possible, pending the elaboration of more radical measures." In the present year the local Government stated that a draft Tenancy Bill had been prepared of which amendments of Act I of 1887 would form part. The Government of India in reply urged strongly that unless there was a practical certainty of the Malabar Tenancy Bill being passed within the current year, the compensation question should be dealt with separately and at once. A draft bill to amend Act I of 1887 was accordingly submitted by the Madras Government in October and will shortly be introduced in the local Legislative Council. It contains provision for securing to the outgoing tenant the full market value of his improvements, considerably restricts the discretion of the Courts in fixing the compensation to be awarded, and will materially strengthen the position of the inferior holder.

60. Sir Charles Elliott before leaving Bengal indicated in a note the points in which the Bengal Tenancy Act VIII of 1885 appeared to require amendment "either on account of its inherent defects or on account of decisions of the Courts which had imparted a non-natural meaning towards, and defeated, the intentions of the Legislature." Sir Alexander Mackenzie was the Member of Council in charge of the Revenue Department when this note was considered by the Government of India, and on his succeeding to the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal he drew up an exhaustive Minute on the subject, and sent it in May 1896 to the Government of India with two alternative draft Bills. After full consideration the Government of India

*Amendment of the
Bengal Tenancy Act.*

decided to recommend to the Secretary of State the first of the two Bills, and in November 1896 an important despatch was addressed to Lord George Hamilton, in which the position was explained and the alternative legislation discussed. It was pointed out that the settlement procedure of the Bengal Tenancy Act deals with two distinct matters—the framing of a record-of-rights and the settlement of the rents to be paid in future by the tenants. With reference to the record it was proposed that the cumbrous judicial proceedings necessitated by the existing Act should be replaced by a summary procedure; the settlement officer's decisions would be presumed to be correct, but any one of them might be questioned by regular suit in the Civil Courts. The parties would thus obtain a summary instead of a judicial decision from the settlement officer, and if they wished to carry the matter further, must sue, not before the settlement officer, but before the judge. As regards rents, the new law provided that the record should first be completely prepared as a record of existing facts in respect of rents as well as of other matters, and that then, and not till then, the question of the settlement of fair rents for the future should be taken up. It further provided for settlement of rents by mutual consent, and in cases where this was not possible, that—

“ Whenever a settlement of rents is being made by a Settlement Officer *pari passu* with the preparation of a record-of-rights, the operations shall be wholly executive and freed from the technicalities of judicial procedure, while the rents so settled shall not be liable to be questioned in a civil court except in so far as they depend on questions of status or contract. ”

It further provided for the preparation by the settlement officer of a table of rates, and the fixation of a fair and equitable rent, those rates being taken as guides, and the reasons of variation being recorded. On the receipt of sanction of the Secretary of State to the introduction of the Bill in the local Legislative Council the opinion of the High Court of Calcutta was invited, and the Bill was published in the provincial Gazette and circulated among revenue and judicial officers, the Chamber of Commerce and Landholders' and other Associations for the purpose of eliciting their opinions. The landholding associations almost without exception expressed themselves strongly opposed to the abolition of civil code procedure in the settlement of rents of permanently-settled estates, and the High Court took much the same view. Sir Alexander Mackenzie therefore recommended that this portion of the Bill should be applied to temporarily-settled tracts and estates owned by Government only, and the Government of India accepted his recommendations, though they expressed the fear that they would “ not prove to be in the best interests of landlords and tenants, ” and the belief that both classes would eventually recognise the fact. Signs were not wanting of the early justification of the belief thus expressed, even before the Bill became law, but Sir A. Mackenzie adhered to his position and the Act was eventually passed in the modified form, and received the Governor-General's sanction on the 3rd May 1898.

61. Attention was first drawn to the advisability of amending the Central Provinces Tenancy Act (IX of 1883) in the Chief Commissioner's review of the land revenue administration of the Central

Provinces for the year 1890-91, in which the following observations were made :—

“ Occupancy rights can no longer be acquired in the Central Provinces by length of tenure, while the substitute of purchase, which section 62 of the Central Provinces Tenancy Act offers for that well-known and on the whole salutary provision of the rent law of some other provinces, is at present practically a dead letter. On the other hand, there are indications that the number of privileged tenants who acquired their status under the 12 years’ rule or by immemorial prescription is diminishing largely through the operation of these provisions of the Act which enable proprietors to absorb protected holdings into their *sir*, *khudkasht* or home-farm lands. On this occasion Mr. MacDonnell desires to do no more than call attention to these matters, and note that they demand very careful examination in the light of the accurate statistics which the settlement operations are now furnishing. The growth and maintenance of tenant right is essential to the prosperity of this Province ; but if through the operation of the existing law this growth is hindered while existing rights are becoming less, the question of altering the law will call for early consideration.”

In 1893 Sir A. P. MacDonnell put forward definite recommendations with which Lord Lansdowne’s Government expressed general concurrence, while suggesting one or two other matters for further consideration. The various proposals then examined may be summarised as follows :—

- (i) to restore the 12 years’ rule of Act X of 1859 with several of the modifications introduced in the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 ;
- (ii) to withdraw from the protected (absolute occupancy and occupancy) tenants the powers of transfer they possess under the Central Provinces Tenancy Act of 1883 ;
- (iii) to confer by statute occupancy rights on all tenants ;
- (iv) to retain the provision for the purchase of occupancy right, amending Section 62 of the Central Provinces Tenancy Act of 1883 so as to enable the tenant wishing to purchase to have a fair rent fixed as a basis for calculating the purchase-money ;
- (v) to prevent the enhancement for seven years of the rent of an ordinary tenant when a settlement officer has lowered it as well as when he has raised it ;
- (vi) to insert a section corresponding to provisions in the Tenancy Acts of other provinces giving power to the revenue authorities to suspend or remit the rent demand when the Government revenue is suspended or remitted.

In October 1894 a letter was received from the local Administration, to the charge of which Sir J. Woodburn had succeeded, in which the foregoing proposals were fully discussed. The Chief Commissioner fully agreed as to the wisdom of (iv), (v), and (vi), but was opposed to (i) and (iii).

62. After full consideration of this letter and the opinions of officers and others consulted Sir A. P. MacDonnell, who was now Member of Council in charge of the Revenue Department, drew up a draft amending Bill in consultation with the Secretary in the Department ;

*Amending Bill
as amended.*

and an important despatch was in March 1895 addressed to Sir Henry Fowler dealing with the whole question. Proposal No. (iii) was dropped and the two "alterations of capital importance," to which the attention of the Secretary of State was invited, were "the proposal to restore the twelve-years rule in the form which it had assumed in Bengal," and the restriction which it was proposed to place upon "the right of transfer enjoyed under the present Act." The latter question was discussed in the despatch with reference not only to the position in the Central Provinces but to the circumstances of India generally.

Secretary of State's orders.

63. The Secretary of State replying in December 1895 accepted the Government of India's judgment that the present law was inadequate and that it was their duty to provide a remedy, and approved of their decision to amend the law. He doubted, however, the expediency of restoring the twelve years' rule and thought it "preferable to work on the lines laid down by the Act of 1883." As to the restriction of the power of transfer "vested at present in the owners of land in India generally" he reserved his opinion until he should be in possession of the decision of the Government of India "upon its many and varied aspects." With reference to the interests immediately concerned, he agreed that the case of absolute occupancy tenants should be considered with the larger question, and that the proposed withdrawal from the landowner of power to contract himself out of his exproprietary right when parting with his proprietary right was desirable: and he raised no objection to the restrictions proposed on the powers of transfer of occupancy and ordinary tenants. In conclusion he sanctioned the introduction of a Bill on the lines approved by him.

The Bill revised.

64. A revised Bill was accordingly drafted and forwarded to the Chief Commissioner in July 1896 for careful consideration at his hands and the hands of his local officers, with a request for a full report "at as early a date as is consistent with full consideration." A further letter was addressed to the Chief Commissioner in August 1896 dealing with certain aspects of the *sir* question. In July 1897 the Chief Commissioner's views on the amendment of the Tenancy Act, and certain cognate amendments in the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act involved in the proposed legislation, were received, accompanied by the opinions of local officers and non-officials, and, after some further discussion, the Bill was introduced in the Legislative Council at Simla on the 1st October 1897. In March 1898 the Bill was referred to a Select Committee, which was subsequently strengthened by the addition to its members of Mr. J. B. Fuller, C.I.E., Commissioner of Jubbulpur. The Committee presented their report in September and the Bill was finally passed into law on the 21st October 1898.

Central Provinces Tenancy Act, 1898.

65. The following are among the most important features of the Act. It confers on "ordinary" tenants, that is, all tenants not included in the more privileged classes known as 'absolute occupancy' and 'occupancy' tenants, the right to have a rent fixed at the time of settlement by a settlement officer for a period of 7 years, and, should the landlord propose to enhance the rent so fixed at the expiry of

the period, the right of reference to a revenue officer who will proceed to fix a fair rent. A tenant who refuses the fair rent is entitled only to compensation for disturbance, but the enhancement is limited to 33 per cent. except where the existing rent is merely nominal. The effect of this provision is said to be to extend to some 700,000 tenants the right to remain in their holdings so long as they pay a fair rent. Restrictions are placed on the power of a landholder to part with the right of remaining in possession of the lands comprising his *sir* or home farm, as an occupancy tenant, when transferring or parting with the proprietary rights in his holding, but the cases where such transfer is obviously in the landholders' interests are provided for, and ample discretionary power of sanctioning such transfers in other cases is given to the local Administration. The power of alienating their holdings is withdrawn from 'occupancy' and ordinary tenants, but the period within which a claim may be preferred to set aside such transfer is limited to two years. The disposal of such cases is entrusted to the Revenue Officer and not the Civil Court, and the rights of the transferee and landlord, in respect of outlay incurred and arrears of rent, are carefully guarded. Retrospective effect is not given to the prohibitions thus imposed on transfers and surrenders.

66. The only remaining provision which it is necessary to notice is of considerable importance and was subjected to some criticism in the Legislative Council by the representative of the land-holding and money-lending interests in the Central Provinces. Section 61 of the Act provides for the conferment on sub-tenants of the rights of an ordinary tenant in cases where the tenant habitually sublets the land and manages it solely with a view to the obtaining of rent. In the course of the discussion in the Legislative Council on the Bill as revised by the Select Committee the Honourable Mr. Rivaz thus explained the objects of this provision:—

"It promises to be the most effective of the checks imposed by the Bill on the transfer of tenants' holdings, which it is the policy of the Government to prevent, inasmuch as, by enabling the Government to deny to a purchaser the right to manage by rack-renting, it will deprive investments in land of the principal attraction which they offer to the non-cultivating classes. It will, on the other hand, offer no impediment to the transfer of land from one cultivating hand to another,—to the replacement of a bad tenant by a good tenant—and is thus free from the objection which applies to more general restrictions on transfer. There is no intention of proceeding generally against tenants who for one reason or another may sub-let their holdings. The section will only apply in tracts where circumstances call for it; and the safeguards which are specified in the proviso to sub-section (1) of the section, together with the provisions for appeals which are contained in section 96, obviate the danger that the interests of *bona fide* agriculturists may suffer from hasty action on the part of particular officers. The section has been so worded as to make it clear that interference will not be warranted in cases where a tenant sub-lets to meet special or merely temporary emergencies, and that the conditions which it is intended to prevent are those in which a person who has obtained the status of tenant makes use of it simply as a means of gaining interest on his purchase-money by extorting a rack-rent from the actual cultivator."

*Tenancy legislation
for Burma.*

67. In 1891 the expediency of taking steps to prevent the transfer of lands in Burma from the agricultural classes to non-agriculturists was urged by the Government of India. The Financial Commissioner then drafted Bills dealing both with this subject and the subject of tenancy. District Officers were consulted regarding the Bills, and it was decided in 1892 to await the report of the Deccan Commission before proceeding further. In 1894 the Financial Commissioner was occupied in collecting the opinions of agriculturists as to the form which measures of agricultural relief should take. The tenancy question was not dealt with fully at this time although a certain amount of useful information was incidentally collected. In 1895-96 the question of agricultural relief was fully considered by the Burma Administration and proposals for dealing with the subject were submitted to the Government of India. During the same period the question of tenancy legislation remained in abeyance pending receipt of information concerning the proposals under consideration for dealing with the subject in the Central Provinces. In 1896 a Tenancy Bill was drafted by the local Administration on the model of the Central Provinces Amending Bill and circulated for opinion to selected officers. The replies were generally adverse to the proposed legislation on the grounds that a tenancy law was not required in Burma and that any such measure would either be a dead letter or mischievous. In 1897, the Chief Commissioner, in a letter addressed to the Government of India, examined, at some length, the objections raised by his officers to the proposed legislation. The mobility of the Burman tenant was urged as differentiating him from the Indian tenant, and it was pointed out that the position of the former was infinitely stronger than that of the latter, inasmuch as in Burma the demand was for tenants and not for land. The Government of India in reply admitted that so far as Upper Burma was concerned matters were not yet ripe for legislation, but they were not convinced that no action was called for in Lower Burma. As to the argument that legislation was premature they said :—

“ Having regard to past experience in other provinces, the Government of India feel some hesitation in accepting the argument that legislation is premature. They cannot but remember that some thirty years ago proposals for the protection of tenants in Oudh were met by the Chief Commissioner of that Province with almost identical arguments to those now put forward by Sir Frederic Fryer. Yet His Honour is doubtless well aware of how the Chief Commissioner's anticipations were falsified, how the evils which it was contended did not exist and could never arise assumed in twenty-six years such proportions that remedial measures could no longer be delayed, and how rent legislation was then carried through in the face of many difficulties. The history of agrarian questions in all parts of India points to the conclusion that the mistake on the part of Government has as a rule been undue delay rather than premature or precipitate action; and the Government of India are strongly of opinion that in Burma at any rate, where difficulties arising from the pressure of population on the land are as yet perhaps scarcely felt, every reasonable effort should be made to anticipate evils rather than to leave future generations to find an incomplete remedy after the mischief has been done.”

They admitted, however, that if restrictions were placed on the landholders' power to alienate their lands, this might go far to prevent

the growth of a tenancy question in Burma, and considered that action might for the present be restricted to collecting full statistics as to tenants and rent rates.

68. The position of this important question when Lord Lansdowne left India is fully stated in Chapter VI of the Summary relating to his Viceroyalty. In July 1894 the Secretary of State, Mr. Fowler, replied to the despatch addressed to him in the preceding January. He decided that the cost of the survey of North Behar should be borne in the following proportions, one-quarter by the State, 5-16ths by the ryots, 7-16ths by the zamindars. With regard to the maintenance of the record-of-rights, there were two schemes before him :—

*Maintenance of
Land Records in
Bengal.*

- (1) That of Sir C. Elliott for increasing the number of rural registrars and compelling by various disabilities the landlords to file revised rent-rolls yearly, and the tenants to register all changes of occupancy by inheritance or transfer.
- (2) Sir A. Macdonnell's scheme for organising a special staff of officials, who would visit every village yearly, record all changes of occupants' rent, and prepare revised village papers year by year. The cost of the special staff would be met by a special tax to be paid half by the landlords and half by the tenants.

He decided in favour of the former, for the present at any rate, until the survey had been made and paid for and until the people had begun to appreciate the benefits which he confidently expected would result from the preparation of a correct record-of-rights. He therefore sanctioned the introduction of a Bill into the Legislature which should provide for maintenance of the record on these lines. This despatch was communicated to the Government of Bengal, and the occasion was taken to lay stress on the value of the village accountant or patwari of Behar even under existing conditions, and the importance of retaining this agency, imperfect though it might be, or of providing an adequate substitute. In December 1894 the Local Government submitted a draft Bill, and sanction was accorded to its introduction subject to the omission of a provision for repealing the Patwari Regulation (XII of 1817).

69. On the latter subject a further communication was addressed to the Government of Bengal, in which the reasons of the Governor-General in Council for desiring no change for the present were further explained. It was said :—

“ Indeed the Government of India find much in the papers now before them to support their contention that the patwari in Behar is, even under present conditions, a valuable agency both to Government and to the ryots. It is doubtless true that he is not all that could be wished, and still less all that he might be made. But to abandon such control over him as Government now possesses, to deprive him of the measure of independence which he now enjoys, and to convert him into a zamindari servant pure and simple, will not tend to improve him; while it will completely destroy his present and potential usefulness to the Government, and so far as the ryots are concerned remove the last vestige of protection which the Regulation provided for them.

"In a province where the only other local machinery available to the Government is that of the police, an agency which it is undesirable to employ on fiscal or agrarian enquiries, the Government of India are most unwilling to relinquish, without an equivalent, any form of organisation, however imperfect, which forms a link between the State and the cultivator. The object with which the Government of Bengal is now preparing a record-of-rights, at much cost both to itself and to the people, is to put itself into a better position from which to fulfil its duties towards the agricultural classes which form so large a portion of the community; and its efforts should be directed towards strengthening and improving, rather than towards abolishing, such remnants of the village organisation as remain to it. This is being done in every other Province, it is even being done at the present time in certain parts of Bengal, and there is no substantial reason why all hope of doing it in Behar should be destroyed by the abolition of that very system which in other parts of India has been, in the space of a few years, brought to a high state of efficiency."

*Land Records
Maintenance Act,
1895 (Bengal).*

70. The Bill was subsequently introduced and passed as the "Land Records Maintenance Act 1895 (Bengal)." In June 1895 the Government of Bengal were further addressed and the "absolute necessity of taking steps to enforce the observance of the Act" was insisted on. Particulars of the machinery to be employed were asked for, and enquiry was made as to the arrangements to be made for the completion of the record and for the correction of the map so as to ensure its being periodically brought up to date. Rules, forms and executive instructions were submitted by the local Government towards the close of the year and a report on the working of the Act was forwarded to the Government of India in August 1896. The Director of Land Records, Bengal, pointed out in his report that the entries in the registers of mutations were of themselves of no value in maintaining the record and that a decennial revision of the record village by village would be necessary, and he expressed the opinion that the Act should not have been entitled the "Land Records Maintenance Act" but rather "an Act to encourage the registration of transfers of immoveable property." This, indeed, would appear to be a correct statement of the position.

*Preparation and
Maintenance of
Records-of-Rights.*

Madras.

Bombay.

Berar.

Coorg.

71. Lord Elgin's Government has not ceased to urge on Local Governments the importance both in the interests of general administration and of tenant cultivators of the soil of preparing and maintaining correct records-of-rights. As regards Madras the question has been more or less incidentally referred to in connection with proposals for increased efficiency of registration, a subject which is dealt with in the Home Department. The Bombay Government who have hitherto regarded proposals for such a record with suspicion, as entailing unjustifiable expense and possible interference with what they justly consider an admirable land revenue system, have within the last year given gratifying assurances of their desire to meet the views of the Government of India and are undertaking an extensive experiment in selected portions of each district. The local Administration of Berar is still unconvinced of the need for such a record, but is being placed in possession of the correspondence with the Government of Bombay and will, it may be hoped, be induced to follow their lead. Coorg has been provided with a satisfactory record and with an agency for its maintenance.

72. The transfer of registration work to the land record establishment was among the subjects considered at the Conference of Land Record Officers in 1883, and in October 1884 a Circular was addressed to local Governments. The replies then received showed that such an arrangement was neither advisable nor possible, but the possibility of bringing the two departments into closer correspondence continued to receive consideration. In October 1895 an important Resolution was issued on the subject. The character and objects of the two systems of registration were reviewed, and the policy of encouraging the tendency, already observable in some provinces where the record-of-rights has gained the confidence of the people, to dispense with registration and to trust to the land-record as evidence of title, was commended. "Wherever," it was said, "a record-of-rights is maintained, no means of rendering it accurate and complete should be neglected," and the step was recommended of bringing, wherever possible, at the first convenient opportunity, the registration and land record establishments under the same responsible head. The object was stated to be two-fold: in the first place by perfecting the registration of rights, to render possible a contraction of the limits within which registration of assurances is compulsory: and in the second place to relieve as far as possible the parties from the trouble and expense of appearance in two distinct departments in respect of one and the same transaction. The subject was further discussed at the local agricultural conferences of 1893, and the conclusions were summed up in a Resolution issued in April 1897. These were that "it would cause administrative inconvenience and injurious dislocation of existing arrangements if the measures proposed were immediately introduced" and "that the object in view might be sufficiently attained for present purposes if the Director of the Land Record Department were permitted to receive copies of reports, annual or otherwise, from the Registration Department, with authority to submit thereon such suggestions and comments as may occur to him for the consideration of the higher revenue authorities." Directors of Land Records Departments were required to give attention to the subject, keeping in view the objects explained in the Resolution of 1895, and to notice it in their annual reports.

*Registration and
Land Records
Departments.*

73. The measures necessary to prevent the growth of the practice of subletting in the province of Assam have formed the subject of correspondence between the Government of India and the Chief Commissioner. The view taken by the Chief Commissioner in 1895 was that the amount of waste land still available for settlement was so great, and the actual amount of sub-letting known to exist so small, that there was no immediate necessity for taking steps to prevent the growth of the practice. The Government of India, however, pointed out that the time must come when the area of culturable waste available for settlement would become more limited, and when that time came the possession of large areas of land by persons who had acquired the status of land-holders must inevitably result in the introduction of the middleman. Steps have accordingly been taken to secure as far as possible that in effecting settlements of waste land the settlement

*Sub-letting of lands
in Assam.*

is offered to persons who will actually cultivate the land, that the area actually settled with one applicant is not larger than he can actually cultivate himself, and that in effecting resettlements the land will be settled as far as possible with the actual cultivator and not with the non-cultivating leaseholder. A recent communication from the Chief Commissioner is under consideration in which the policy of creating in Assam a landlord class intermediate between Government and the cultivator is advocated.

Principal papers referred to :—

Despatch No. 57, dated 4th November 1896, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 4, dated 14th January 1897, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 20, dated 27th March 1895, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 137, dated 5th December 1895, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 88, dated 5th July 1894, from Secretary of State.

Resolution No. 4, dated 19th April 1897.

CHAPTER VII.

STATE AID TO THE AGRICULTURAL CLASSES.

74. During Lord Elgin's administration there has been no cessation of effort to carry out the recommendation of the Famine Commission of 1878, that every facility should be given for the grant of loans for works of improvement or the purchase of seed and cattle in times of agricultural distress. During the ten years ending 1890-91, the sums made available for this purpose increased from Rs. 4,80,800 in the first year to Rs. 20,63,800 in the last year of the decade. During the last eight years grants have been made to the extent shown in the following table :—

	Rs
1891-92	46,10,310
1892-93	54,29,060
1893-94	23,41,490
1894-95	31,42,870
1895-96	28,21,470
1896-97	1,10,43,350
1897-98	1,16,45,075

The provincial reports on the recent famine bear eloquent testimony to the value of these advances to agriculturists during a period of acute and widespread distress. Nor have they been less valuable in enabling cultivators to take advantage of the more favourable seasons that have ensued and in some measure to retrieve their position.

75. With a view to simplifying procedure and making the grant of such loans more easy, the rules under the Land Improvement Act, XIX of 1883, and the Agriculturists Loans Act, XII of 1884, have been revised from time to time in the case of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, the Punjab, Assam and Burma.

76. The question of the possibility of establishing agricultural banks on a satisfactory basis has been advanced a stage by the submission to the Madras Government by Mr. F. A. Nicholson of a valuable and exhaustive report on the whole subject. This report in which the various systems in practical working on the continent of Europe are described, and their applicability to Indian conditions discussed, is under the consideration of the Madras Government, whose conclusions are now awaited.

77. Much attention has been devoted during Lord Elgin's administration to the special laws which provide for the State taking under its own management the lands of indebted proprietors and for protecting the latter from unscrupulous creditors. In 1895 a despatch was addressed to the Secretary of State with reference to the amendment of the existing law of Tenancy in the Central Provinces, in which a summary was given of the measures which it was proposed to take in order to prevent the agricultural classes losing their rights in the land through indebtedness. Amongst

*Amendment of the
Court of Wards law.*

other remedies suggested was the modification of the law relating to Courts of Wards, whereby indebted proprietors might be enabled more easily to take advantage of the aid of the State to extricate themselves from their embarrassments. In pursuance of this object, local Governments were consulted, and in 1897 the Government of India communicated to them their views as to the direction which such modifications should take. The Bombay Government have continued to hold the view that no general Court of Wards Act for that Presidency is required, but they have found it necessary to revive with the consent of the Imperial Government the Sind Encumbered Estates Act, XX of 1881. In other provinces the views of the Government of India have met in all essentials with cordial acceptance; the Court of Wards law for Bengal, the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and the Central Provinces are now under amendment, and Madras has made proposals for the revision of an old Regulation on the subject pending the elaboration of a more complete measure. The following are among the important questions discussed in the correspondence. The desirability was suggested of the State taking power to assume, without the consent of the proprietors, the management of encumbered estates in the public interest in cases where the proprietors were disqualified from management neither by age, sex nor infirmity. The difficulties in the way of such a measure have, however, proved to be greater than was anticipated and the proposal has now been definitely abandoned. Provisions have also been discussed for preventing the owners of estates which have come under the management of the State from encumbering them after discharge by the Court beyond the term of their life. Sir A. P. MacDonnell on behalf of the North-Western Provinces has opposed such a measure and the Governments of Bengal, Madras and the Central Provinces which are in favour of it are now reconsidering the point. The assumption of power to take over estates of proprietors who admit their inability to manage them, at their own request, which already has a place in the Central Provinces law, has been generally approved. Valuable suggestions for the dispossession of usufructuary mortgagees and the entrusting of the execution of Civil Court decrees against wards of the Court to the Collector have been received from Madras, and will probably be embodied in the complete measure for that Presidency.

*Deccan
Agriculturists
Relief Act (XII of
1879 amended by Act
VI of 1895).*

78. This Act was originally devised for the protection of the Deccan ryots from the money-lenders who were fast dispossessing them of their holdings. The outcome of the discussions following the report of the Commission of 1891, appointed to enquire into the working of the Act, was a despatch addressed to the Secretary of State in 1895 in which it was stated that the Government of India contemplated passing, in accordance with the recommendation of the Commission, an equitable relief Act on the general model of the Deccan Act, to be applied where needed for the protection of the small agriculturist, whether owner, occupant or tenant. Later in the year the draft of a Bill of this character was submitted to the Secretary of State together with a copy of a circular addressed

to local Governments and Administrations on the subject. For reasons which are being explained to the Secretary of State, it has now been decided not to proceed further with a general Agriculturists Relief Act. But local Governments and Administrations are to be asked whether they think any special legislation is necessary for their provinces or any special tracts, in respect of any matters which were included in the Bill which was circulated to them in October 1895.

79. Of the subjects with which the Department of Revenue and Agriculture is concerned undoubtedly the most important that has occupied the attention of Lord Elgin's administration is that of restricting the right of land transfer by the agricultural classes. In a Minute written shortly before his departure, Lord Lansdowne recorded his opinion that legislation on the lines of the Deccan Agricultural Relief Act would only "touch the fringe of the great question of agricultural indebtedness," and urged the necessity of a full enquiry by the Department with a view to further reforms including measures for restrictions upon land transfer. An elaborate note on Land Transfer and Agricultural Indebtedness in India was accordingly prepared in the Department, and the case was summarized in a memorandum by the Secretary which was submitted to Lord Elgin in 1895. In a Minute recorded with reference to these papers His Excellency said:—

*Land Transfer
and Agricultural
Indebtedness in
India.*

"Doubtless there will be points on which some difference of opinion may arise, but the memorandum of course deals with Indian problems, and it is in the light of the customs that have prevailed, the circumstances which exist, and the dangers which threaten in India, that it must be read and criticised. I do not intend to undertake anything of the kind at this moment. What is proposed is to take advantage of this paper to elicit other opinions, and only after that has been done, and the views of all have been examined, to proceed to consider what legislation may be necessary.

"All therefore that I desire to say at this moment is that, although the difficulties attending that great subject are many and various, I believe it is our bounden duty not to shrink from at least some attempt to advance its discussion.

"My predecessor impressed upon me its ever-increasing importance, and I have found but one sentiment in that respect among those who know India best."

His Excellency proceeded to express his opinion that further information and the views of local Governments and their officers on the papers in question should be obtained with a view to placing the case before the public with more complete knowledge. A confidential circular was accordingly issued in which the general position was stated. The following passage indicates the lines which were to be followed:—

"I am therefore to request that each local Government and Administration will take the subject into its most careful consideration, and will communicate, as soon as it has matured them, its final views and definite proposals for action in the direction indicated. I am to express a hope that the whole question may be dealt with in a practical way, avoiding as much as possible abstract and general discussion. It is not of course intended by this to debar free expression of opinion on matters of principle; but merely to indicate the wish of the Government of India that each local Government should consider the question with direct reference to the

circumstances of its own Province, and should endeavour to suggest practical remedies for such evils, actual or potential, as it finds existing there.

* * * * *

Action taken.

80. Replies having been received from all Governments except Madras and Bombay, who are understood to be still collecting information, it became necessary to determine on the action to be taken. It was decided to deal with the Punjab first, not only on grounds of political expediency, but also because "the fact that in that province the power of transfer is in principle opposed to a customary law of very general application supplied a convenient basis of action." The idea of general legislation was abandoned as impracticable, and it was decided that after the particular measures to be adopted in the Punjab had been settled, the case of other provinces should be taken up. Accordingly, in March 1898 the Government of India communicated to the Government of the Punjab the opinion they had formed on the evidence and recommendations contained in the minutes and reports of the local authorities, and suggested that their proposals should be discussed by a committee of selected officers summoned to advise the local Government. The suggestion was acted upon and a strong Committee sat in the following July under the presidency of the Lieutenant-Governor. Their final recommendations were shortly after submitted to the Government of India together with a Minute by the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Mackworth Young, in which he defined his own position with regard to the conclusions of the Government of India communicated to him in March. After consideration of these papers an important despatch, dated the 3rd November 1898, was addressed to the Secretary of State, in which the whole case was reviewed, and leave was asked to legislate for the Punjab on the following lines:—

I.—To prohibit all sales or other permanent alienations of land, unless sanctioned by a revenue officer under executive instructions issued by the local Government, except to—

- (1) any agriculturist holding land as an owner or occupancy tenant in the same village where the land sold or otherwise permanently alienated is situated, or
- (2) any descendant in the male line from the common ancestor of the alienor and the alienee.

The definition of "land" to be as in the Punjab Tenancy Act, that is, land used for agricultural purposes or for pasture. No distinction to be made between "ancestral" and "self-acquired." The definition of "agriculturist" to be, unless or until altered by a declaration of the local Government with the sanction of the Government of India for any district or part of a district, the same as that of "old agriculturist" in the existing rules under the Punjab Land Revenue Act.

II.—To deal with mortgages and leases on the lines recommended by the Punjab Committee, except that the maximum period of alienation should be limited to 15 years.

Retrospective effect to be given to the Committee's proposals so far as to declare invalid any conditions of the nature of a conditional sale in a mortgage registered before the law comes into operation.

III.—The above measures to be general throughout the Punjab, but the local Government to have power to grant exemptions, with the sanction of the Government of India.

IV.—To amend the present law of pre-emption in the Punjab and to transfer the hearing of such cases from the Civil to the Revenue Courts.

V.—To abolish all sale of land, as defined in the Punjab Tenancy Act, in execution of decrees.

VI.—To restrict hypothecations of agricultural produce.

The despatch concluded in the following terms :—

“We may add that after receiving Your Lordship's reply to these proposals with regard to the Punjab, we propose to take up the case of the other two temporarily-settled zamindari provinces of Upper India, *i. e.*, the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and the Central Provinces. As far as we can judge at present, we shall not propose any prohibitions of permanent alienations in these provinces, but shall probably deal with temporary alienations on the lines proposed for the Punjab. We shall probably propose the abolition of compulsory sales in execution of decrees, as in the Punjab; and we shall consider whether in either province legislation in respect of pre-emption is required.”

Principal papers referred to :—

Circular No. 9, dated 10th May 1895.

Circular No. 6, dated 24th April 1897.

Despatch No. 23, dated 6th May 1896, to Secretary of State.

Extracts from the correspondence regarding the amendment of the Central Provinces Land Revenue and Tenancy Acts.

Despatch No. 58, dated 30th October 1895, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 141, dated 12th December 1895, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 59, dated 3rd November 1898, to Secretary of State.

CHAPTER VIII.

IRRIGATION.

The Government policy.

81. The progress in the construction of canals is dealt with in the Public Works Department Summary. During Lord Elgin's administration there has been no departure from the policy hitherto accepted under which, as explained in a previous summary, "the agricultural community are exempted permanently or temporarily from any enhancement of revenue on lands irrigated from works constructed by themselves whether wells or canals; while the improvement due to works constructed by the State is to be assessed *at full rates*." The construction of a large and costly perennial canal in the Mandalay District of Upper Burma afforded an opportunity for again affirming the policy thus briefly indicated. An important letter was addressed to the local Government in February 1898, in which the principles which the Government of India considered should be followed in any scheme for the assessment of water and land revenue rates upon the perennial canals about to be constructed were set forth at length. It concluded in the following terms :—

Irrigation in Upper Burma.

The final result of past experience in Upper India is that the best system for a large perennial canal is that of occupier's rates varying with the crop grown pitched as high as may be possible without discouraging resort to irrigation, and subject to quinquennial revision, supplemented by a somewhat higher assessment of land revenue upon wet than upon dry land. The Government of India, however, fully recognise that this system may need modification before it can be applied to the very special circumstances of Upper Burma. That is for His Honour to consider. But the Governor-General in Council has thought it well that he should know how much money has been lost and what difficulties have arisen in the North-Western Provinces, and in a less degree in the Punjab; so that, as far as possible, their mistakes may not be repeated in Burma, but that advantage may be taken of their experience. No doubt useful hints might be obtained from the study of the canal systems of other parts of India also, and especially of Madras, where the conditions probably approximate in some respects to those obtaining in Upper Burma. Finally, I am to explain that what has been written above applies only or mainly to large and costly irrigation works. In the case of small canals of old standing, such as are believed to be numerous in Upper Burma, everything depends on their nature, their history, and the local customs and traditional method of management; and (as no one knows better than Sir Frederic Fryer) they must necessarily be administered with reference to the special conditions of each. And though the principles which underlie the foregoing remarks may doubtless be borne in mind with advantage in the case even of such canals, yet it is not for a moment suggested that the same uniformity of system should characterise their management as is possible and desirable in the case of the larger and more costly works.

The attention of the Government of Madras was also in 1894 directed to these guiding principles in connection with the question of rates in the Godavari and Kistna Districts.

Canal rates in the Punjab.

82. For the last few years the efforts of Government have been mainly devoted in the Punjab to the simplification of the canal rates which were much complicated as each canal had its own system. As

pointed out by Sir E. Buck in his summary of the subject drawn up in 1896 "the main cause of the multiplication of rates seems to have been a desire on the part of the local Government to secure as much of the canal revenue as possible as provincial income." This led to the enhancement of owners' rates, the income from which is credited to land Revenue, at the expense of occupiers' rates. It has now, however, been recognised that direct adjustment between the local and the imperial Governments to make good losses that may be caused to provincial revenues by a change of system is the proper way to meet the difficulty, and the Punjab Government has consented to abolish owners' rates on canals on which Government has a free hand. The new system is that all land is to be assessed at dry rates; that on canal irrigated land owners' and analogous rates should be consolidated into a water-rate levied from the cultivator in respect of each field irrigated, and that the canal water-rate should be supplemented by an addition to the land revenue dry assessment for the term of settlement, to be paid by land-owners on land classed as canal-irrigated. The Government of India have approved the extension of these principles to all perennial canals where their introduction is feasible, and meanwhile every opportunity is being taken to simplify and assimilate the rates on all canals throughout the province.

83. An interesting question has arisen in connection with proposals to construct a canal in the Sindh-Sagar Doab of the Dera Ismail Khan District. The land concerned is at present of very little value. If a canal is made, it will acquire a great value. It will not, however, pay to construct a canal unless a colonization scheme can be carried out. But the initial difficulty has to be faced that out of 2,945,843 acres concerned, 270,969 acres were held previous to the last settlement by the villagers in proprietary right, whilst at settlement nearly 2,000,000 acres more were granted to the villages in proprietary right as grazing grounds on nominal terms. The question therefore arises as to how the area requisite for colonization is to be acquired. For many reasons action under the Land Acquisition Act is out of the question. It has therefore been decided to pass a special Act with the object of enabling landholders to enter into agreements with the Government regarding the surrender to the State of waste areas on certain terms conditional on a canal being constructed within a certain limit of time. The measure will probably enact that, notwithstanding any law or custom to the contrary, any person who appears to have a right, title or interest in any land may enter into an agreement to surrender such right, title or interest to Government on certain conditions to be set forth in the agreement, and that every such agreement shall confer a valid title in respect of such land. One of the conditions will be that on the completion of the canal the Government will allot to the person who has thus surrendered his waste lands an area of irrigated land equal to one-quarter the area of waste surrendered. The scheme is so clearly in the interests of the present proprietors that no considerable opposition is anticipated.

*The Sindh Sagar
Doab Scheme.*

84. The Chenab Colonization Scheme deserves special mention here both on account of the magnitude of the area involved and the

*Chenab Colonization
Scheme.*

complete success which has so far attended the operations of the officers entrusted with the work. Some 600,000 acres have already been colonized, a further area of 756,000 acres of waste is now being taken in hand, and an area estimated at 850,000 acres remains, bringing up the area of government waste which will eventually fall within the irrigation limits of the Chenab Canal to approximately 2,200,000 acres. The area irrigated during 1896-97 was 520,279 acres, the capital outlay up to that year Rx. 2,043,114 and the net earnings of the canal in the same year 6·75 per cent on the capital. The percentage that will eventually be earned is estimated at not less than 20 per cent.

Jamrao Canal Scheme.

85. A similar scheme of colonization is under consideration in connection with the Jamrao Canal which is being constructed from the Eastern Nara river in Sindh. The cultivable area commanded is estimated at 772,000 acres of which about a third should be irrigable annually.

Irrigation and the Famine of 1896-97.

86. The question of irrigation in connection with the famine of 1896-97 has been treated at length in the report of the Famine Commission, and a brief statement of the case is contained in paragraphs 103 to 111 of Mr. Holderness' narrative of the famine. It will be sufficient therefore to say here that since 1877 the capital outlay on works for which capital accounts are kept has increased from Rx. 20,000,000 to Rx. 35,000,000, the gross revenue from Rx. 1,688,000 to Rx. 3,100,000 and the area irrigated from 7 millions of acres to 10 millions of acres. In addition, between $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 5 millions of acres are irrigated from small State works, for which no capital accounts are kept.

Growth of irrigated area.

87. Turning to the period of Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty, the following statement shows the areas irrigated from all sources in all provinces except Bengal (for which figures are not available) in the years 1892-93 and 1896-97 respectively :—

Table showing areas irrigated in all provinces except Bengal, for which figures are not available, for the years 1892-93 and 1896-97.

Provinces.					1892-93.	1896-97.
					Acres.	Acres.
Madras	...	...	...	...	5,701,198	5,741,336
Bombay and Sindh	...	...	...	...	3,529,014	3,635,524
North-Western Provinces	...	...	...	...	6,809,470	7,432,218
Oudh	...	...	...	...	2,441,053	2,266,346
Punjab	...	...	...	...	7,066,037	8,720,408
Central Provinces	...	...	...	...	680,575	790,427
Lower Burma	...	...	...	...	5,145	5,403
Upper Burma	...	...	...	...	424,971	568,575
Berar	...	...	...	...	43,466	63,346
C. P.	...	...	...	...	500	1,370
Ajmere-Merwara	...	...	...	...	133,654	140,246
Total (excluding Bengal)					26,838,083	29,865,199

NOTE.—Figures taken from the Returns of Agricultural Statistics for the five years 1892-93 to 1896-97.

CHAPTER IX.

LAND SURVEYS.

88. Among the scientific departments under the immediate control of the Supreme Government the Survey of India ranks as the oldest and most important. Its operations extend over the whole of India, and involve an average expenditure of 30 lakhs annually. During Lord Elgin's tenure of office there has been no material change in its organization; but the staff has been divided into an Imperial, Provincial and Subordinate Service, on the principles recommended by the Public Service Commission of 1886-87, and adopted in other branches of the administration. The change, which was prompted by considerations of administrative convenience and economy, does not, as the term 'provincial' might imply, affect imperial control. Under the previous organization the staff consisted of a Senior Division, recruited mainly from the Military Establishment of Royal Engineers and Staff Corps Officers; a Junior Division, filled by European or persons of European extraction engaged in India, and to a small extent by natives; and lastly a Subordinate Service, composed entirely of natives. To a limited extent officers of the Junior Division were promoted to the superior service by selection. Under the new scheme the Senior Division or Imperial Service will consist exclusively of officers who have either been transferred from the Army or have been recruited directly from England, and no promotions from the Junior Division or Provincial Service will be permitted. But a certain number of the superior appointments have been transferred to the junior service on a reduced scale of pay, and, as compensation for temporary loss of prospects, selected senior men of that service have been granted personal allowances and other concessions. When the scheme is complete, it will secure an annual saving of Rs. 25,000.

The Survey of India Department.

89. Excluding the subordinate establishment, the staff now consists of thirty-eight officers of the Imperial Service, and one hundred and forty two officers of the Provincial Service. It is divided into twenty-one parties, of which number at the present time eleven are engaged in what may be termed the remunerative branch of survey work, *viz.*, the measurement and mapping of cultivation and forests, or the provision of a traverse or skeleton in small triangles as a basis for the detailed village maps. Six parties are occupied with large topographical surveys, including survey reconnaissances on the frontiers, and four on scientific work, such as triangulation and tidal and levelling operations.

The staff, survey parties, and their work.

90. The preponderance of parties engaged in 'remunerative' work is the result of a policy which has been pursued by the Department of Revenue and Agriculture during the last fifteen years. An accurate map of each village giving the area and boundaries of fields is an indispensable feature of the village records on which the assessment of the revenue, the rights of ownership, and the administration of the land depends. Under the old system the village maps of a

Relation of imperial and local surveys and the policy of the Government of India.

district were re-constructed at intervals of twenty or thirty years, upon the expiry of the land settlement, by a staff of imperfectly trained native surveyors under the Settlement Department. They were unconnected with the regular surveys, and were consequently of little or no use for the correction or compilation of the professional topographical maps; nor was there any competent agency for recording annual changes and keeping the maps up to date. On the other hand the professional department was almost exclusively employed in producing small scale maps of no utility for revenue purposes, and owing to the comparative expensiveness of its operations, local Governments hesitated to employ it on their revenue or field surveys. The financial advantage of combining the two operations of compiling a field map and a topographical map, and the improvement in accuracy to be gained by entrusting them to a properly trained agency being manifest, the closer association of the professional survey staff in the preparation and maintenance of the village field map, and the substitution of remunerative for unremunerative work, have been the leading principles of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture in its control of survey operations.

91. Under its guidance the cost rates of the Imperial Survey Department have been greatly reduced by the larger employment of local native agency, with the results that it has been more extensively utilized for cadastral surveys; the sudden reduction of the department, which must otherwise have followed the completion of its scientific work, and the attendant expense on pensions has thus been avoided; the land record establishment is receiving a professional training in surveying; the village maps are being rendered sufficiently accurate to be accepted for cartographical purposes; and a large saving in expenditure on special surveys has thereby been secured. But in order to give permanency to these reforms a further step is necessary. It was pointed out to local Governments ten years ago that during, and, perhaps, a few years after the conclusion of current settlements and survey operations there may be no difficulty in maintaining a correct system; but when officers who are now experts in settlement and survey operations disappear from the province or are called to other duties the same standard will not be preserved. With the lapse of years there has been a material contraction of cadastral operations and the force of these remarks has become more appuent. In almost every province a well organised working-plan for keeping the land-record establishments up to a satisfactory standard of proficiency in survey has become a necessity, and the Government of India have recently addressed local Governments on the desirability of settling what the working-plan is to be—partly in order to enable a proper forecast to be made of the ultimate strength of the Imperial Survey Department staff, and partly in order to secure a proper maintenance and revision of cadastral maps for the future throughout all provinces.

*Future constitution
of local survey
departments, and
maintenance of maps
and records.*

92. The scheme which has the advocacy of the Surveyor General is one of decentralization. It is proposed to transfer a portion of the survey staff to service under each local Government. The officers transferred

would be retained for purposes of pay, promotion and recruitment on an imperial list, and be professionally supervised by the Surveyor General and his staff. But in all other respects they would be under the control of the local Government, and would constitute a Provincial Survey or Land Record Department responsible for all local surveys, the maintenance of cadastral maps up to date, and the continuous training of the village land record establishment in surveying. The Imperial Survey staff would then be reduced to a limited number of parties for carrying on trigonometrical and other scientific operations, and for the topographical mapping of any large unsurveyed tracts excluded from cadastral operations. On this scheme the opinions of local Governments are awaited. If adopted, it will finally enforce the principle, always urged by the Government of India, that survey work of every description should be the duty of the professional department, and officers transferred to provincial service will no longer be treated as on temporary deputation.

93. In its main features it is an expansion of measures which have already been adopted in several provinces. Thus in the *North-Western Provinces and Oudh* the local Government has several officers of the imperial department on loan for the professional supervision of its current land-record surveys, and the number has recently been increased. Present position in each Province. Proposals have been received for placing these arrangements on a permanent footing, but they include no provision for employing a professional supervising staff in maintaining the village maps in districts in which they have lately been revised in connection with settlement proceedings. In the *Central Provinces* also, survey officers have been utilized in settlement survey operations, and an attempt has even been made to carry out traverse surveys by local agency trained only for field mapping, contrary to the rules laid down by the Government of India, but better provision is required to ensure that maps and records are properly corrected. In *Bengal* accurate field maps have been prepared with the help of the Survey Department for Orissa and other temporarily-settled tracts which have recently come under resettlement, but measures remain to be devised for securing active and continuous inspection. In *Berar*, where the Bombay system is followed of dividing the whole village area into survey blocks permanently demarcated on the ground by pillars, the advantage of training village officers in surveying has not been fully realized, and the Government of India have had occasion to re-affirm their orders to the local Administration on the subject. In the *Punjab* professional assistance has been sparingly employed and field surveys have been carried out in all level tracts by the village agency trained in a local system of survey. The local Government has been asked to consider the expediency of attaching one or more survey officers to the provincial Land Record Department to ensure the maintenance of a proper standard of accuracy in maps produced on this system.

94. In *Assam* owing to the shifting character of cultivation and the fact that the land assessment depends upon annual measurements, special precautions have been taken to maintain the local revenue

surveys up to a proper standard of accuracy. The village officials are trained and supervised by a Superintendent of Land Records recruited from the Survey Department, and the Chief Commissioner has recently asked to be allowed to employ a detachment of the Imperial Survey permanently in the province to provide advance traverses for field plotting and to assist in testing and inspecting the cadastral maps and records. Similar conditions prevail in *Burma*, where, however, owing to local peculiarities, it has not been possible to utilize the village officials, and an elaborate special machinery has been created for the up-keep of land record and maps in districts which have been initially surveyed and settled. A professional standard of efficiency in survey is secured by recruiting a certain number of appointments in the controlling staff from the Survey of India. With the extension of the area falling under the operations of the special department it has become necessary to provide a superintendent for each district in Lower Burma, and proposals for an increase of the controlling staff on this basis have been made to the Secretary of State.

Madras

95. In the Presidencies of *Madras* and *Bombay* settlement surveys have been carried out by local survey departments, but under the direction of the Supreme Government the policy adopted by the local Governments has been similar to that followed in Northern India. Survey and settlement operations are approaching completion in both presidencies. In *Madras* strenuous efforts have been made of late years to give village officials a training in survey, and arrangements for the future maintenance of field maps are now under discussion. The proposal made by the *Madras* Government is to retain a certain number of its survey officers to form a land record department. It has also urged the necessity for retaining in addition a small permanent scientific survey staff for purposes of supervision and to carry out special surveys. The scheme has not yet assumed a definite shape, and the measures ultimately accepted will depend upon the decision which may be come to on the question of the cadastral survey of the large permanently-settled area of the Presidency. In Northern India the necessity of extending survey and record operations to permanently-settled tracts in the interests of good administration has been finally recognized; but the *Madras* Government are doubtful whether the same necessity exists in that Presidency. With the support of the Secretary of State Lord Elgin's administration has pressed a reconsideration of this view on the local Government and urged that full power should be taken in the Tenancy Bill now before the *Madras* Legislative Council to enable Government to order a survey of permanently-settled estates should one be decided upon.

Bombay.

96. In the *Bombay* Presidency the settlement surveys will be completed by the year 1901. Some progress has been made in training the village establishments and more would have been effected but for difficulties arising from the system of hereditary offices obtaining in a considerable portion of the Presidency. As a tentative measure three officers of the local survey were appointed Superintendents of Land Records under the Director in 1891, and amongst the duties assigned to them a prominent place was given to the training in survey

of village accountants. On the understanding that this portion of their duties will now be vigorously prosecuted their retention for a further period of three years has been recently sanctioned.

97. The foregoing remarks briefly indicate the position which has *Forest Surveys.* been reached during the past five years in the practical introduction of the survey reforms initiated by the Department of Revenue and Agriculture in 1882 and their influence on the training of the village record establishments. For a more detailed account of the measures taken in the past and the policy to be pursued in the future, reference may be made to the historical summaries and the Resolutions of 20th March 1897, mentioned in the second chapter. One other step, in connection with forest surveys, is deserving of mention. The same causes which induced local Governments to undertake cadastral surveys independently of the imperial department led to the organization of a separate staff for forest surveys under the Inspector General of Forests. With the introduction into the imperial department, of cheaper methods and increased adaptability as regards special and local requirements the justification for an independent forest survey branch has weakened, and the Government of India are now considering whether all forest surveys cannot in future be entrusted to the imperial department.

98. As evidence of the growing usefulness of the Imperial Survey *Miscellaneous.* Department it may, in conclusion, be noted that not only has it become the recruiting ground for local Governments requiring trained officers but it has enabled the Government of India to afford friendly assistance to various foreign Governments in the survey of their territories, and to equip frontier expeditions with the means of extending geographical knowledge beyond its own borders. Within the past five years several survey officers have been lent by Lord Elgin's Government to Siam, Egypt and British Central Africa, and others are being deputed to accompany a party engaged in exploring a railway route through Burma to China.

Principal papers referred to :—

Resolution No. 6, dated 27th March 1895.

Letter No. 1655, dated 17th August 1893, to Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

Despatch No. 31, dated 17th February 1898, from Secretary of State.

Letter No. 332, dated 5th February 1896, to Government of Madras.

Letter No. 415, dated 27th July 1898, from Government of Madras.

Despatch No. 121, dated 12th May 1897, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 101, dated 24th June 1897, from Secretary of State.

CHAPTER X.

STATISTICS.

*Statistical duties of
the Department*

99. In Lord Hartington's despatch of the 16th June 1881, sanctioning the reconstitution of the Secretariat of Revenue and Agriculture, the statistical duty of the department was succinctly described as "the more complete and systematic ascertaining and rendering available of the statistics of vital, agricultural, and economic facts in every part of India in order that Government and its officers may always be in possession of an adequate knowledge of the actual condition of the country, its population and its resources." In fulfilment of this duty the policy has been steadily pursued of extending and perfecting the agency for the collection of information. Great strides have been made in organizing and training the village establishments and in introducing a continuous statistical record for each village. Even Bengal, which for a hundred years has statistically been a 'dark continent,' is being brought into line with the other provinces by the gradual extension of cadastral surveys. Under the operation of the tenancy legislation now in progress, the permanently settled estates of Madras, which comprise two-thirds of the Presidency, will, it is hoped, be also removed in course of time from the category of areas for which no returns are available. Agricultural returns are also coming in from an increasing number of Native States which have adopted the British system of settlement and village records. For the collection of information regarding the economic, industrial and mineral resources of the country, departments of scientific enquiry have been organized, and various steps have been taken to render available and popularize the knowledge gained by the publication of monographs, hand-books and bulletins. An historical summary of the work undertaken since their organization by the imperial and provincial departments of agriculture in the improvement of the land-record establishments, the utilization of land-records, the prosecution of scientific and statistical enquiry and the publication of agricultural and economic information, together with an explanation of the policy to be pursued in future in relation to these matters, will be found in the series of eight resolutions of the 20th March 1897, referred to in the second and eleventh chapters of this narrative.

*Value of statistics
during the late
famine*

100. The great practical utility of the efforts which the Department has made to enlarge the statistical information at the disposal of the administration was conspicuously illustrated during the recent famine by the accurate estimates which the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh were enabled to make of the extent of crop failure, and of the number of persons who would require relief. Not only have they resulted in supplying the State with the means of accurately gauging the condition of the agricultural classes in times of distress, but they have proved of great benefit in reducing the cost, trouble and harrassment to the people which in former days attended the periodical revision of the land assessment.

*Central agency for
the digestion of
statistics.*

101. But while the organization of the statistical agency in the provinces has proceeded apace, and an ever increasing mass of

information has been concentrated in the Imperial Department, that department itself has, until lately, been unprovided with any machinery for subjecting the returns received to intelligent correction, co-ordination or explanatory discussion. An endeavour was made in 1890 and again in 1891 to remedy the defect by the formation of a special statistical office within the secretariat, but financial considerations stood in the way. The necessity for an agency to do the work which lay waiting to be done became however more apparent and more urgent every year. It came again under discussion early in 1894, when the Secretary of State, in connection with the preparation of the moral and material progress report of India which is presented to Parliament suggested that an agricultural and economic census, involving a review of ten years' statistics, should be decennially made by an officer temporarily appointed for the work.

102. There were three alternatives to be considered : the original proposal put forward by the Department for a statistical branch under a permanent Assistant Secretary, which had been put aside on the score of expense ; the proposal of the Secretary of State for a decennial review by a special officer ; and a proposal made by the Finance Department that the work should be transferred to the statistical section of that Department which already dealt with statistics relating to foreign and coasting trade and shipping, prices and wages, and other financial, commercial and revenue subjects, most of them more or less intimately connected with the statistical material received in the Revenue and Agricultural Department. The proposal made by the Secretary of State did not commend itself to the Government of India. It was represented to His Lordship that it would be impossible to ensure accuracy and uniformity of method if the collection and compilation of statistics were not continuously controlled and supervised ; and that information to be of actual and not merely academic use and interest should, when published, be accurate as well as recent. These results would not be secured by an examination and review undertaken at long intervals. It was therefore proposed as the most economical, if not the most satisfactory expedient, that the third alternative should be adopted and the work transferred to the statistical branch of the Finance Department, its clerical staff being strengthened by drafts from the Revenue and Agricultural Secretariat.

Three alternative schemes considered.

103. To this scheme the sanction of the Secretary of State was received in March 1895. The special branch has been constituted a Statistical Bureau under a Director General of Statistics who retains, ex-officio, his office of Assistant Secretary in the Finance Department. It now undertakes the compilation of the agricultural returns of India furnished annually to the Secretary of State, and the publication of the returns of inland trade, crop forecasts and other cognate statistics formerly tabulated and ledgered in the Revenue and Agricultural Department. The Director deals with the statistics pertaining to that Department, in communication with it and under its general direction and control, though he remains officially attached to the Finance Department. He is also the general adviser of the

Constitution of a Statistical Bureau.

Department in all matters relating to its statistical work and is expected to assist in the discussion of any cases coming up for disposal, which demand an examination of statistical evidence, by providing and reviewing the figures bearing on the issues concerned.

*Present results and
future aims.*

104. The Department has thus succeeded in securing during the period of Lord Elgin's tenure of office, the inauguration of a much needed reform in the statistical organization. The statistics with which it is concerned have been placed under the supervision of an officer skilled in such matters who will deal with them continuously upon a uniform plan, and will collate them and publish the results in a properly digested form. Much still remains to be done towards making available to the public the general bearing of the varied information regarding the land and the people which is being gathered up by the elaborate land record machinery, but the way is being prepared by an improved and systematic tabulation of the materials, in which respects the Bureau has already made considerable progress.

Principal papers referred to:—

Despatch No. 7, dated 30th January 1895, to Secretary of State.

Resolution No. 15, dated 23rd May 1895.

CHAPTER XI.

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT.

105. It has been explained in previous summaries that the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, abandoning the earlier attempts at improving Indian Agriculture by costly experiments in the introduction of western methods and appliances which led to no definite results, set itself to attack the problem by the organization of an agency for the continuous record and analysis of agricultural facts, and the gradual development of a scheme of practical investigations by experts in the various branches of science useful to agriculture. The whole object of the policy was the ascertainment by patient and prolonged enquiry of the measures which might be safely and beneficially taken by Government assisted by the best scientific advice procurable, in behalf of the great national industry. *The Policy of Government*

106. In furtherance of this policy an important step had been taken during the years immediately preceding Lord Elgin's arrival. A distinguished agricultural expert (Dr. J. Voelcker, Agricultural Chemist of the Royal Agricultural Society of England) had visited the country on an official mission, to "advise on the best course to be adopted in order to apply the teachings of agricultural chemistry, and in order to effect improvements in Indian agriculture." He had submitted a report with recommendations covering a wide range of subjects bearing directly or indirectly on agricultural questions, and his suggestions had been discussed in detail by a conference of officials of the provincial and imperial departments of agriculture. The immediate result of Dr. Voelcker's mission was the appointment for a term of five years of an Agricultural Chemist and an Assistant Chemist, but it remained for Lord Elgin's administration to deal with the resolutions of the conference and lay down the agricultural programme for the future. *Dr Voelcker's mission.*

107. Before taking formal action upon the recommendations of Dr. Voelcker and of the conference of 1893 Lord Elgin's Government decided that an officer should be deputed to consult with local Governments and ascertain what local measures were most practicable and best suited to the conditions of each province, so that the general lines to be laid down might be capable of being followed with the greatest advantage and the least difficulty. Sir E. Buck, the Secretary in the Agricultural Department, who during the previous fifteen years had been largely instrumental in shaping its policy, was selected for the duty. He conferred during the cold weather of 1895-96 with the local authorities in each province upon the subjects selected for discussion, and early in 1897, after the views of local Governments had been received on the results of his conferences, the matured conclusions of the Government of India on the scheme of agricultural improvement to be prosecuted in future under the combined action of the imperial and provincial Governments were promulgated in a series of eight Resolutions. *Deputation of Sir E. Buck, and the Resolutions of 1897.*

*Agricultural
Experts.*

108. Of the subjects dealt with in these Resolutions the employment of agricultural experts, experimental farms and agricultural education fall within the scope of this chapter. In regard to the first the Government of India have now recognized that an exception must be made to the general principle that scientific enquiry should be national and not provincial, and that, unlike other branches of research, agricultural science is a field in which most of the work must be done by local observers and experts. This is a final acceptance of the views urged by the Famine Commission of 1880 and confirmed by Dr. Voelcker and by various conferences of agricultural officers, which the Department had hitherto refrained from actively supporting in its desire to discourage extravagant and premature attempts at agricultural reform. Convinced by so strong a consensus of opinion Lord Elgin's administration has announced to local Governments that "the time has now come when in every province in which no such arrangements have yet been made, a definite scheme should be drawn up under which a strong and efficient staff of agricultural experts will be within a limited period placed at the disposal of the provincial department of agriculture." It is hoped that it may ultimately be possible to provide for the training of these experts in India, but it has been laid down as an essential condition that until natives sufficiently well trained and qualified are available the staff should include an expert with European qualifications.

*Direction of
agricultural
experiment in the
future.*

109. The employment of European experts and a trained staff of assistants involves the establishment of experimental farms, and the Government of India have required that the scheme for which they have called should "include at least one central experimental farm adequate both in area and in the staff with which it is equipped to ensure the conduct of experiments on the system advocated by Dr. Voelcker." They have also urged that all possible measures should be taken for the intelligent trial of agricultural improvements in estates under government management, as an encouragement and example to private landlords, and that when necessary the lessons learnt at the central experimental stations should be brought home to the agricultural community by means of demonstration farms. But experience has shown that agricultural improvement cannot be achieved by experts and farms alone. There must be capable guidance, definiteness of purpose and continuity of action. It has therefore been impressed upon local Governments that in selecting an officer for the post of the head of the local agricultural department full consideration must be given to the agricultural side of his duties, and that progress in agricultural enquiry must not be hindered by too frequent changes in the incumbency of the appointment. They have further required that all operations should be strictly limited to what is practicable with the means available; that they should be conducted on a working-plan previously determined and be continuously maintained until definite results have been secured. This principle is to apply not only to experiments on farms, but to the larger investigations into defects in the agricultural system, for which it is the object of experimental action to provide a remedy. And without

absolutely restricting the discretion of local authorities the Government of India have demanded that "every agricultural department should always have before it for special investigation at least one agricultural defect of importance; and that if more than one are brought under enquiry at one time their number should not be so great as to lead to desultory and imperfect action in the case of any one of them."

For the active and successful prosecution of these measures the imperial and provincial departments will need a professional adviser of high attainments in agricultural science, who will in consultation with provincial officers co-ordinate scientific investigations, initiate enquiries, construct working plans for provincial farms and generally guide with his advice the course of experiment and preserve continuity of action. The Agricultural Chemist appointed by the Secretary of State in 1892 was not qualified for these duties, and, on the termination of his engagement in 1897, the Government of India asked that he should be replaced by a first-rate agricultural expert, possessed of breadth of view and the faculty of initiative who as Inspector General of Agriculture should be "capable of guiding and advising ourselves and local Governments in systematising and developing agricultural education and research." A selection for the appointment has not yet been made by the Secretary of State.

110. On the important subject of agricultural education the instructions of the Government of India have been based on the now generally accepted proposition that "no general advance in the agricultural system can be expected until the rural population has been so educated as to enable them to take a practical interest in agricultural progress and reform". The Resolution which explains the lines of future action approved by Lord Elgin and his advisers deals with the subject under the four heads of Primary Education, Readers and Text books, Training Schools and Higher education in Agriculture. *Agricultural Education.*

111. In regard to primary instruction the principle has been insisted on that the first aim of the educational scheme should be the development of faculty and of the powers of observation; and that for this purpose the training of pupils in the elementary truths of science (including agriculture), by means of suitable readers and object lessons, should be a compulsory part of the curriculum. Provided these conditions are observed the Government of India have thought it unnecessary to insist on any special instruction in agriculture, at any rate in the earlier stages of the educational course, for the reason that almost all instruction conveyed in rural schools through the medium of object lessons must acquire an agricultural colouring, because the surrounding objects used for illustration are themselves connected with agriculture. The preparation of suitable readers and text books in agriculture and allied sciences has of necessity been left to local Governments, as owing to the peculiarities of each province uniformity in India is impossible. But general uniformity of plan and system and a high standard of arrangement, simplicity and clearness can be secured, and local Governments have been informed that in the opinion of the Government of India the task is one of such grave importance in connection both with the interests of agriculture and with the sound education of the people that it should only be entrusted to the very best authorities available in the country. *Primary Instruction.*

Training Schools.

112. As to training-schools the desirability of instructing school-masters how to teach by means of object lessons and readers has been acknowledged by local Governments and the development of training-schools in this direction rests with them. But the Government of India have desired that the question should be considered whether training-school students, either before or after appointment as masters, should not go through a course on an agricultural farm, as in one province in which this plan has been followed the students have proved the only efficient teachers of agricultural subjects and cognate sciences.

*Higher Education
in Agriculture.*

113. With regard to higher agricultural education the Government of India have hitherto held the view that, until a satisfactory opening in life could be found for the students, the establishment of agricultural colleges was premature, but the opinion is now gaining ground, and has been acted on in some provinces, that practical education in agriculture and allied sciences fits candidates as well if not better than a literary course for the land revenue and cognate services. Such colleges would also be required for the education of training-school teachers, and there is evidence from at least one province that they would be utilized by a considerable number of land-owners. Under these circumstances the Government of India have felt justified in giving their recognition to the following conclusions supported by the conference, as a tentative scheme for the establishment of higher education in agriculture, to be developed as circumstances admit after further discussion with Local Governments:—

- (1) that agricultural degrees, diplomas or certificates should be placed on the same footing as corresponding literary or science degrees, etc., in qualifying for admission to government appointments, and more particularly those connected with land-revenue administration;
- (2) that there should be not more than four institutions giving a high class diploma, *viz.*, at Madras, Calcutta, Bombay and some place in the North-Western Provinces, and that these should be utilized by other provinces;
- (3) that the diploma should eventually be compulsory in the case of certain appointments, *e.g.*, agricultural teachers at training schools, assistants to the director of agriculture, etc.;
- (4) that the practical instruction of candidates for certain subordinate appointments at a school class or an experimental farm should be further considered;
- (5) that a special school course leading up to the agricultural diploma degree or certificate, is required;
- (6) that the practice of allowing school masters either before or after appointment to pass through a course of a few months on a government farm is one which deserves consideration.

114. Enough has been said to indicate the broad outlines of the agricultural programme launched by Lord Elgin's administration after the most careful and prolonged discussion of the subject by experienced officers and experts. With this pronouncement of the views of the

Government of India the Department of Revenue and Agriculture has entered upon the second stage of its duties, the first, which absorbed the greater part of its attention for fifteen years and in which much still remains to be accomplished, being the reform of revenue administration, the training of a land record staff and the perfecting of the system of famine relief. It would, however, be erroneous to suppose that during this long period the investigation of agricultural improvement has been entirely put aside. In most provinces experimental farms have been maintained, and in a few agricultural experts are already employed; nor has the subject of agricultural education failed to receive attention, especially in the Southern Presidencies. But action hitherto has been desultory and wanting in unity of purpose. The Resolutions of the Government of India are intended to remedy these defects, to define the future policy and to lay down the outlines of the working-plan which has in process of time to be accomplished by the joint action of the Supreme and Local Governments. It is satisfactory to record that the Madras Government has expressed its full acceptance of the programme and initiated measures in accordance with it. In Bengal a beginning has been made in higher agricultural education by the opening of an agricultural class in association with the Civil Engineering College at Sibpur near Calcutta, which includes a practical course in experimental farming. The action taken or in contemplation in other provinces has not yet been communicated to the Government of India.

115. Attention may now be directed to the working of those branches of scientific enquiry under imperial control which are closely related to agriculture and which have not been noticed elsewhere in this Summary, *viz.*, agricultural chemistry, veterinary science, economic entomology and botany. *The work of Subordinate Scientific Departments.*

116. As stated in a previous paragraph an agricultural chemist was appointed for five years in 1892. His work consisted chiefly of the analysis of soils, water, manures and agricultural products. He was also occupied in studying native methods of cultivation and in advising on the conduct of investigations in experimental farms. A complete account of the work accomplished during the five years he was employed, is contained in a final report submitted in 1897 and the results of the more important of his researches have been published in the "Agricultural Ledger", a serial issued under the editorship of the Reporter on Economic Products for the publication of agricultural and economic information. The work done will prove useful and suggestive in the investigations to be carried out by provincial experts under the scheme of the future, but it was not of the character for which a professional adviser on agricultural matters is required by the Supreme Government, and for the reasons already explained the Secretary of State has been asked to appoint another officer as Inspector-General of Agriculture in place of the Agricultural Chemist. *The Agricultural Chemist.* The Indian experience gained by the officer who held the latter appointment has not, however, been lost, as he has accepted a junior position as Assistant Agricultural Chemist, in which capacity he will lecture at the Forest School, Dehra, and to the agricultural classes at Poona and Saidapet in Madras and Bombay, besides carrying out analyses.

*The Indian Museum
and Economic
Entomology.*

117. The investigation of economic entomology has been allotted to the staff of naturalists of the Imperial Museum at Calcutta to which a special grant of funds was made for the purpose. With the co-operation of provincial agricultural departments the museum staff undertakes to study the life history of any insects reported from time to time to be injurious to crops, and advises on the best means for their destruction, and their researches are published in the form of 'Museum Notes.' It may be necessary hereafter to arrange for the more active prosecution of enquiries into insect pests injurious to agriculture by special experts, as the routine duties of the museum staff preclude exploration in the field.

*The Botanical
Department, and
investigation of plant
diseases.*

118. At present, however, the assistance of science is more urgently needed in the investigations of plant diseases of vegetable origin and their remedies. One form of fungoid disease known as 'rust' causes incalculable damage annually to Indian wheat; another is very injurious to the valuable sugarcane crop; and many similar cases might be cited. The Botanical Department as at present organised is not adapted for the practical investigation of such questions. It is chiefly concerned with the systematic branch of botany, *i. e.*, the collection, classification and geographical distribution of Indian plants generally, although under the guidance of the Agricultural Department it has of recent years devoted a part of its time to the dissemination of botanical knowledge of plants of agricultural and economic value, and has even undertaken a preliminary enquiry into fungoid diseases. This defect, judged from the standpoint of present needs, in the botanical organization is now in course of being remedied, as appointments in the department fall vacant, and the Madras Presidency has recently been provided with a botanist capable of assisting in practical investigations. But the requirements of the Northern Provinces in which the 'rust in wheat' problem is of pressing importance remain to be provided for, and the Government of India have asked the Secretary of State for the services of a specialist in cryptogamic botany to enable them to deal with it. In doing so they have taken the opportunity to explain their views as to the best method of enlisting the aid of science in investigations of this nature. Briefly the conclusions at which they have arrived are, (1) that the investigation of definite economic problems which can be accomplished within a limited period and do not call for the employment of permanent machinery, should be carried out by first class scientists engaged for three or five years on liberal terms, who may be trusted to devote their utmost energies to the task out of regard for their own professional reputation, and (2) that the aid of the leading men of science in England should be obtained in exercising a general control over the researches of the experts so engaged in the same way as the work of Indian observatories is now supervised by the Astronomer Royal and his coadjutors.

*The Civil
Veterinary
Department.*

119. For dealing with the large and important branch of rural economy which is represented by agricultural stock a Civil Veterinary Department was created in 1892 by the transfer from military to civil control and simultaneous expansion of the department of military horse-breeding. The organization of the department is still in course of development. Considerations of economy and efficiency led to its

being formed on the basis that the superior appointments should be recruited exclusively from the army veterinary staff, so that the civil department might on the one hand be equipped with officers of training and experience and on the other constitute an army reserve in case of serious war. The terms offered to Army officers have, however, so far failed to satisfy them, and revised conditions of service which are still under discussion have been proposed to the Secretary of State. Objections have been raised by the War Office to the recruitment of the civil department from the army, but the Government of India attach much importance to the maintenance of this feature of the scheme and a further representation is about to be made on the subject.

120. Under the peculiar circumstances of its formation the primary duty resting upon the Civil Veterinary Department is the promotion of horse and mule-breeding, with the object of increasing the supply of remounts and transport for the army, and to this duty its energies have been mainly devoted during the past five years. The number of stallions employed and the area of breeding operations have been greatly increased, but the most important advantage gained has been the active co-operation of the local civil authorities. One of the principal difficulties to be overcome is the comparative scarcity of mares suitable for mating with the thoroughbred stallions supplied by the Imperial Government, and in this matter Local and District Boards are now giving material assistance by maintaining stallions which, though not up to the imperial standard, are of a class which will in course of time improve the indigenous breeds generally and increase the supply of the better class of mares. Similar measures are being taken in regard to the breeding of mules.

121. Owing partly to the demands of horse and mule-breeding but chiefly to the inadequacy of the staff and the absence of a subordinate agency the Veterinary Department has hitherto been unable except in one province to devote much attention to cattle. But the way is being cleared for active measures; the foundation of a subordinate veterinary establishment, the complete organization of which must be a work of time, has already been laid, institutions for the training of veterinary practitioners have been developed and improved, numerous veterinary dispensaries have been established, a laboratory for the bacteriological investigation of animal diseases has been completed, and the opportunities of the Department for promoting cattle breeding have been enlarged by the recent transfer to it of the Military Cattle Farm at Hissar. The lines on which the subordinate establishment should be organized are now being finally considered by the Government of India after lengthy correspondence with local Governments. The provision of the staff will fall on provincial and local funds and the questions with which the Government of India are concerned are, the extent to which uniformity of organization is possible and the arrangements for securing proper supervision and control.

122. The provision of veterinary dispensaries and trained practitioners is necessary to bring veterinary aid within the reach of the agriculturist and familiarize him with rational methods of treating the ordinary diseases of animals. But even more necessary is the discovery *Study and treatment of cattle disease.*

of remedies for those destructive murrains which are endemic in the country and periodically cause enormous damage to agricultural stock. Bacteriological research into the causation and cure of these diseases, chief amongst which is rinderpest, has therefore been an essential feature of the civil veterinary scheme. A laboratory was established for this purpose at Poona under Dr. Lingard, a Bacteriologist of European reputation, but owing to unsuitability of climate was removed to Muktesar, a station on the Kumaon Himalayas. Its equipment has recently been completed and Dr. Lingard who had occupied the interval in investigating an obscure horse disease called *Surra*, was about to commence systematic operations when his studies were unfortunately again interrupted by his serious illness. Work in the laboratory will for the present be carried on by an officer of the Indian Medical Department under the supervision of the Director General of the Department to whom the control of the laboratory has been temporarily transferred. Meanwhile interesting and valuable experiments are being carried out by individual officers of the Civil Veterinary Department on the lines initiated by Professor Koch, who was good enough on the occasion of a recent visit to India to give practical demonstrations at the Muktesar laboratory of the preventative and curative treatment adopted by him. It is improbable, however, that this treatment can be extensively employed under the circumstances prevailing in the country, unless means can be found for avoiding the slaughter of animals for the supply of inoculating matter.

123. Until suitable and effective remedial agencies have been discovered, a trained machinery for applying them provided, and the agricultural classes educated to recognize the benefits of sound veterinary methods, the Government of India are not disposed to encourage proposals for legislation in connection with cattle disease. A partial exception to this policy has been permitted in the case of Burma where great progress has been made in spreading veterinary knowledge and organizing a veterinary staff. In 1894 the local Government submitted a draft Cattle Disease Bill to enforce, amongst other things, the reporting of outbreaks of contagious or infectious cattle disease, the segregation of diseased animals and the burial of carcasses. In the opinion of the Government of India, however, the bill exacted too much from the people and they decided that any measure undertaken should be of a simple character which could be carried out without great compulsion, through the village organization which the people understand, and would be capable of easy modification. The legislation ultimately assumed the form of an amendment of the Burma Village Act, 1889, and Upper Burma Village Regulation, 1887, authorizing the making of rules "for the cure or prevention of the spreading of any contagious or infectious disease among domestic animals of any kind."

*Live-stock
Importation Act of
1898.*

124. Legislation has also been undertaken by Lord Elgin's Government for the regulation of the importation of live-stock which is liable to be affected by infectious disorders. In 1896 their attention was drawn to the fact that the disease known as Tick fever or Texas fever was very prevalent and fatal amongst cattle in parts of Australia,

and that there was serious danger of its introduction into India through the medium of Australian horses, which are imported in large numbers and are capable of conveying the parasite through which the disease is communicated, although themselves immune to it. The statute book contained no law which enabled the Government to guard against such dangers and a short Act was accordingly passed in August 1898 conferring the requisite powers. Under its provisions the Governor General in Council may by notification prohibit, restrict or regulate the importation of live-stock liable to be affected by infectious or contagious disorders, and local Governments are empowered to make and enforce rules for the detention, inspection, disinfection, or destruction of imported live-stock, fodder, etc. Rules are now being framed to give effect to the Act and they will in accordance with his injunctions be reported to the Secretary of State before any further action is taken.

125. In connection with legislation for dealing with animal diseases mention may also be made of the amendment of the Act passed in 1879 for the protection of army horses against outbreaks of glanders and farcy. In 1896 it was extended to the provinces of Madras and Bengal to which its provisions did not apply; and in order to admit of more effective action an alteration was made whereby a veterinary practitioner, whose functions under the old law were confined to certifying to disease, may also be empowered to take the authorized steps for its suppression. With the systematic enforcement of the Act which the creation of a veterinary department has made possible its further amendment has since been found desirable and a bill is now before the Legislative Council re-enacting the law and enlarging its scope. It will enable Government to apply the provisions of the Act to other dangerous equine diseases when necessary, and confer upon the Inspector under the Act increased powers of entry for the purpose of ascertaining the existence of disease.

*Proposed
re-enactment of the
Glanders and Farcy
Act of 1879.*

Principal papers referred to :—

- Despatch No 32, dated 11th June 1895, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 27, dated 19th May 1896, to Secretary of State.
- Resolution No. 15, dated 7th September 1895.
- Resolution No. 17, dated 17th September 1895.
- Resolution No. 19, dated 20th September 1895.
- Resolution No. 3, dated 20th March 1897.
- Despatch No. 18, dated 24th March 1897, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 24, dated 14th April 1897, to Secretary of State.
- Resolution No. 3, dated 31st January 1894.
- Despatch No. 6, dated 27th January 1898, to Secretary of State.
- Resolution No. 10, dated 28th June 1895.
- Despatch No. 37, dated 15th June 1897, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 63, dated 31st March 1898, from Secretary of State.
- Resolution No. 16, dated 17th September 1895
- Resolution No. 8, dated 5th May 1898.
- Despatch No 35, dated 7th July 1898, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No 50, dated 25th August 1898, to Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XII.

EMIGRATION.

The emigration question in India.

126. Overcrowded as are many parts of India there is no active movement of the population to colonize new lands beyond the immediate vicinity of the overcrowded areas. All attempts on the part of the State to attract settlers from overpeopled areas to waste lands, which involved their settlement amongst an alien population, have proved futile. The only schemes of colonization for which success can be claimed are those for settling the arid tracts of the Punjab, rendered habitable by the extension of canal irrigation: and here the settlers are, for the most part, agriculturists from the neighbouring districts. But although the native of India does not emigrate to any extent with the definite intention of colonizing, he is willing enough to do so for prolonged periods, and to distant countries, to labour for hire, with the prospect of ultimately returning with his savings to his native land. This form of emigration does not afford any appreciable relief to overpopulation, but it ameliorates the lot of many who are unable to find a livelihood in India, and it is of advantage in augmenting the capital in the hands of the agricultural classes, for the savings remitted or brought back by emigrants amount annually to many lakhs of rupees. It also results in a gradually increasing residuum of permanent settlers, and may hereafter pave the way for a colonizing movement. Both the Secretary of State and the Government of India have recognised the importance of securing for the Indian population the labour fields which are now being opened out in tropical and semi-tropical lands, and it is the established policy to encourage labour emigration as far as may be consistent with the proper treatment of Indian subjects in the countries to which they proceed.

Free emigration to Africa, etc.

127. The extent of official control deemed necessary depends upon circumstances. With the emigrant who travels at his own expense, and is bound by no contract, there is no interference—he is free to seek employment on his own terms in any country which will receive him. There is a considerable stream of free emigration, chiefly of petty shop-keepers, traders, artisans and such like, to countries in close proximity to India. This may be expected to increase with the improvement and cheapening of communications. It has, in fact, recently found for itself a new opening in East Africa, and the emigration thither of several thousands of Indians from the Bombay Presidency gave rise in 1896 to the general question whether emigration to the African Colonies should not be brought under legal control. The decision at which Lord Elgin's administration arrived was, that it would be unwise to interfere with the voluntary movement which had arisen, and impolitic to suggest to the African Colonies the introduction of emigration under a system of labour laws. Subsequently however it transpired that under cover of free emigration a systematic evasion of the Emigration Act was taking place, and that workmen and labourers under verbal agreements were being conveyed to Africa in the guise of free passengers. Local Governments were warned to strictly enforce the law, and the advisability

of strengthening its provisions was considered. Some doubts had arisen whether the Act applied to artizans, or covered verbal as well as written agreements. The Government of India were advised by the Secretary of State that artizans were labourers within the meaning of the Act, and local Governments were instructed to proceed upon this interpretation. A successful prosecution for evasion of the law, which involved the issue whether the term 'agreement' included verbal agreements, obviated for the time being the necessity for altering the Act in this respect; but it was found necessary to do so in another direction in order to more effectually check attempts to obtain coolies by enticing them into Portuguese territory for shipment.

128. It is in the case of labourers who emigrate under engagements, whether with or without the inducement of money advances, that Government have been compelled to interfere for their protection. The principal safeguards insisted on are, that the intending emigrant shall be recruited without fraudulent inducements; that he shall be fully informed of the terms of his engagement and conveyed in comfort and safety to his destination; that in the country to which he proceeds there shall be secured to him, while under contract, a minimum wage proper medical aid in case of sickness, impartial adjudication of disputes with employers, and, in the case of distant colonies, that he shall be repatriated at the expiration of his agreement. These precautions are not required to the full extent in every case. Classed according to the degree of protection imposed, the countries which obtain labour from India under advances or contracts fall roughly into the following groups:—

Various forms of State regulated emigration.

- I—Those to which such emigration proceeds without the restrictions of emigration or labour laws.
- II—Those which are permitted to recruit labourers in India without legal restrictions, but in which the emigrant is subject to a labour law approved by the Government of India.
- III—Those to which emigrants proceed under special laws regulating their recruitment in India, and their employment in the importing colony.

129. Under the first group comes the temporary emigration of labourers to Burma under advances from *maistris* or labour-contractors which, since 1883, has been free from legislative interference. The relations between these labourers and their employers or contractors are subject to the ordinary civil and criminal laws. Of the same class is the labour emigration to the tea and coffee estates of Southern India, but the planters have of late years urged the necessity of a labour law. In 1895 their grievances were laid before Lord Elgin at Madras, and in consequence of their representations a commission of enquiry was appointed whose report is now under consideration. The main points brought out by the Committee are, that as regards imported labour, on which the large majority of the planters, both in British and Native State territory, have to depend, the system of advances, which is shown to be a long established custom in that part of India, is a necessity ;

The Southern India labour question.

that the present legal means of enforcing labour contracts in the planting districts are quite inadequate, the planters in the Native States of Mysore, Travancore and Cochin being at a special disadvantage in this respect; and that legislation is needed in the planters' interests and may fairly be granted to them, to lessen the difficulties with which they have to contend. The recommendations of the Committee proceed on the lines of amending the Madras Labour Act V of 1866, which, as it stands at present, has been practically a dead letter; they advocate the extension of the amended enactment to Coorg, and its adoption by Mysore and Travancore and Cochin; and they ask that reciprocity should be secured in working its provisions between the British and Native State districts affected. The Madras Government approves generally of the Committee's recommendations, and it will rest with that Government to give effect by legislation to such of the proposed measures as the Government of India, with the approval of the Secretary of State, may finally approve.

Emigration to adjacent countries.

130. To the second group belong countries adjacent to the Indian continent, *viz.*, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements with its protected Native States, British North Borneo and Sarawak.

Ceylon.

131. Emigration to Ceylon has long been free from interference on the Indian side, the Madras Act of 1866, which was meant to regulate it, having proved superfluous. The Tamils of Southern India are quite at home in the island, which is easily accessible from the main land, and they work on the plantations under short-term engagements, regulated by a simple local labour law. During the late famine an offer was made by the Ceylon Government to import labourers from the distressed districts of Northern India on the same terms. Ceylon, however, is a foreign and unfamiliar country to natives of Northern India, and Lord Elgin's Government felt that the proposals could not be acceded to without the adoption of special precautions. The scheme was therefore dropped.

Emigration to the Straits Settlements.

132. Like Ceylon, the Straits Settlements have for generations been in constant intercourse with the Madras Presidency and possess a large resident Tamil population, but owing to the stricter control demanded by employers the labour law is of a more elaborate character; for it is an axiom of the Indian emigration policy that protective measures and labour penalties should go together. In 1883 the Straits Settlements were exempted from the provisions of the Indian Emigration Act, which were found unnecessarily restrictive, and the recruitment and registration of labourers proceeding under contract to the colony were left to executive rules. On its part the Colonial Government passed a labour ordinance approved by the Government of India, and prohibited the removal of Indian labourers from its territories to countries to which emigration is not lawful under the Indian law. In 1884 power was taken by an amendment of the Indian Emigration Act to extend the same system to the protected Malayan States, and in 1890 the Government of India having decided that similar concessions might be granted, under the guarantee of the Straits Government, to other British possessions in the Eastern Archipelago, the power was enlarged to include any "British Colony or Possession" recruiting Indian

labourers through the agency of the Straits Government. A further amendment was found necessary in 1896 to admit the State of Sarawak to the same privileges, and this was carried out by the substitution of the words "Colony or State" for "British Colony or Possession." So far the only countries in behalf of which the power has been exercised, are British North Borneo and Sarawak, emigration to which is still in an incipient stage.

133. Meantime the Straits Government has approached the Government of India with proposals to free labour emigration to its own territories from all restrictions, and place it on the same footing as emigration to Ceylon. This being the ultimate aim of the Government of India itself, Lord Elgin in Council expressed his willingness to accede to the proposal, and to withdraw the Indian rules for recruitment and registration, provided that greater freedom of contract and less onerous terms were secured to Indian labourers in the Straits, and that the provisions for the official inspection of estates, the proper treatment of coolies, and the prohibition of illegal emigration were maintained. An ordinance giving effect to these conditions was received and approved by the Government of India in 1897, but owing to opposition on the part of the planters it was held in abeyance until the subject had been discussed by the Governor personally with the Government of India. This discussion took place in January 1898 and the Government of India have recently received a revised ordinance on which the opinion of the Madras Government is awaited. The chief point of difference between this Bill and the previous one is the restoration of the penal sections of the existing law, the planters being by this provision enabled to take their choice between a state-regulated system of indentured labour, and the free labour or *kangani* system of Ceylon.

134. A relaxation of the Indian Emigration Act has also been found necessary in favour of a new class of labour emigration which the development of East Africa has called into existence. Large numbers of Indian workmen and coolies have been required for the construction of the railway from the Coast to Lake Victoria. Under the law as it stood these labourers could not be recruited until the importing country had adopted legislation for their protection, and then only with the full machinery of licensed recruiters, depôts, emigration agents, ships specially fitted and provisioned, etc., required by the Indian Act. Since the coolies were to be employed under the protection of Her Majesty's Government, Lord Elgin's Government agreed with the Secretary of State that the emigration procedure might in their case be simplified, and that their interests would be sufficiently safeguarded if arrangements were made to fully explain to them, before embarkation, the terms of their agreement, which should include a provision for their ultimate repatriation. The Indian Emigration Act was accordingly amended in 1896 to enable the Governor General in Council, by notification, to exempt from all or any of its provisions natives of India leaving the country under an agreement made with, or on behalf of, Her Majesty's Government, to labour for hire in any country beyond the sea. This alteration of the law

*Labour for the
Uganda Railway.*

was made to meet a special exigency, and the Government of India have in dealing with other applicants for Indian labour for public works in Africa declined to relax the provisions of the general law.

*Emigration to
distant countries.*

135. The third group comprises the labour-importing countries to which the Indian Emigration Laws apply in full force. These laws are contained in the Indian Emigration Act, 1883, and the Assam Labour and Emigration Act, 1882. The former regulates emigration beyond the seas (with the exceptions already mentioned) while the latter governs the recruitment and supervision of the labour force employed in the tea gardens of Assam. The countries beyond sea which import coolies under the Act of 1883 are the British and Dutch sugar-growing colonies of the West Indies, Fiji, Natal, Mauritius and Seychelles. Of these the last has recently been added to the list, while the West Indian colonies have been customers for Indian labour ever since the abolition of negro slavery. An application has been made to extend the Emigration Act to the territories of the Sultan of Zanzibar where slavery was recently abolished, but the Government of India await an assurance that the Sultan's Government has the power of effectively enforcing a labour ordinance against private employers, many of whom would be foreign subjects; and no final agreement has yet been arrived at.

French colonies.

136. The French colonies of the West Indies and Réunion were also, at one time, importers of Indian labour, but their coolies were unfairly treated, kept in perpetual bondage, and only repatriated when decrepit and penniless. After years of unavailing remonstrance the Government of India stopped emigration to the French possessions, and so far as the West Indies are concerned it is not likely to be renewed. In the case of Réunion, however, where Indian labour is said to be essential to the sugar industry, the Government of India, though not desirous that emigration should be resumed, have not refused to open negotiations. After protracted enquiries and discussions, including the deputation of a former Under Secretary in the Department to Réunion and Paris, the French Government have acceded to most of the stipulations of the Indian Government, and a Convention for the renewal of emigration was signed at the commencement of the present year. But ratifications have been postponed owing to the opposition of one of the Island Deputies in the French Chamber, who represents the creole element to which the renewal of emigration is obnoxious. The principal reforms which will be secured by the Convention are, the reduction of the term of the coolie's initial contract from five to three years, his complete freedom on the completion of his contract, and the limitation to one year of all contracts subsequent to that first entered into.

*Mauritius and
British
West Indies.*

137. In contrast to the condition of affairs in Réunion, the coolies in the neighbouring British colony of Mauritius are a prosperous race, and the resident Indian population is now so large that the colony has recently closed its emigration agency in India. In the British West Indian colonies also, there is an increasing Indian population which may in a few years suffice to supply all the labour required. To assist the depressed sugar industry the Government of India, in

view of the excellent care and treatment accorded to the coolies in these colonies and the facilities open to them for acquiring a good livelihood, have agreed to a proposal that in future the returning emigrant, unless destitute or disabled, should contribute to the cost of his passage in the proportion of one-half in the case of males and one-third in the case of females. A similar concession has been applied for on behalf of the Fiji planters and the matter is under consideration.

138. As regards Natal some troublesome questions have arisen during Lord Elgin's tenure of office. In this colony, as in other parts of South Africa, the white settlers have viewed with indignation and alarm the influx of free Indian immigrants and the prospects of competition with coloured labour. Two delegates arrived in Calcutta in 1894 to discuss measures by which the coolie recruited for Natal might be required to return to India after the completion of his term of indenture, or in other words, by which he could be prevented from remaining in the colony otherwise than under indenture. Rather than lose Natal as a field for Indian labour the Government of India consented to the inclusion in the contract of a condition binding the coolie to return, provided that he was not criminally dealt with for refusal; and also provided that compensating advantages were offered in the form of a free passage at the end of each and every term of indenture and that, at the end of the second term, wages were secured to him equivalent to the highest market wages for free labour. But in sanctioning the concession His Excellency informed the Government of Natal that he had little sympathy with the views that would prevent any subject of the Crown from settling in any colony under the British flag. It was not intended that this measure should apply to free immigrants, including the 30,000 Indians who had already settled in Natal after serving out their contracts. A strong political agitation, however, continued in the colony, and eventually the local Legislature passed laws adversely affecting the status and diminishing the political rights of Indians already in the colony. The latter have appealed both to the Government of India and the Secretary of State. For the reasons explained in the following Minute by Lord Elgin the Government of India have refrained from taking any part in this controversy which properly belongs to the domain of the Home Government. The immediate cause of contention has for the time being been partly removed by the stoppage of all free emigration owing to the plague. In the minute referred to His Excellency observed :—

The coloured labour question in Natal.

I agree that the proper course is to address the Secretary of State, for, I think, it is Her Majesty's Government alone who can exercise influence, and I am not sure they can exercise much.

The only weapon in our own hands is to stop the indentured emigrants, and I venture to think that is at least premature. It is admitted that the indentured emigrants are well treated, and I am much inclined to take the view of the situation described in the last paragraph of Sir J. Westland's note of February 13th, 1894. We can secure good treatment for these men. Nothing we can do will

secure a position of equality for the free emigrant. In the stage of civilisation which the colony of Natal has reached that is a counsel of perfection.

Even as it is the grievances of the free Indians, as stated under four heads in the Honourable Member's note, do not imply ill-treatment, and Mr. Ghandi himself scarcely alleges that. What he says distinctly to some of his interviewers is, that he wants to establish the right of Indians to equality as British subjects. I sympathise with that, but I think Natal is not the best place to fight the question, and I should prefer them to endeavour to influence the authorities to remove—so far as they can—after all in social matters it does not altogether rest with them,—some of the invidious distinctions complained of: but it would be a mistake to press them on points like the franchise. It would be quite another thing if the movement of which we complain was one set on foot by the Natal Government. Governments may be expected to listen to reason, or if they won't we are justified in taking steps to compel them. In this case it is quite clear that we have to deal with a popular feeling, which, if not irrational, is, at any rate, guided a good deal by sentiment; and I doubt whether a course of action on our part which would be likely to result in an *impasse* so far as emigration is concerned, would be well calculated to bring about a better state of feeling.

*Emigration to
Assam Tea gardens.*

139. Turning next to Assam, this is the only Indian province where a system of state-regulated labour emigration has been found indispensable, and its existence is due to the great tea industry which employs over half a million of labourers imported from Bengal and the Central and Northern Provinces. The possibility of dispensing with special legislation has more than once received the anxious consideration of the Government of India, but the conclusions to which they have been forced is that, whatever may be possible when the province is fully colonized and opened up by railways, the time has not yet come when penal labour contracts can be abolished without imperilling an important industry. At the same time the Government of India, when legislating in 1882, expressly avoided interference with free emigration which they are desirous of encouraging to the utmost. Their anticipations in regard to free emigration have not been realized, and unintentionally the existing law has developed a system of 'assisted' emigration outside its provisions under which the coolie, instead of being registered and put under contract in the district of recruitment by a licensed contractor, is conveyed by speculative and unlicensed labour-brokers, without registration or contract, to Assam and there engaged to his employer.

*Working of the
Assam, Labour and
Emigration Act.*

140. To secure adequate sanitary and to some extent also executive control over these assisted emigrants in their journey to the labour districts, an Act was passed in 1889 by the Bengal Council. Between 1890 and 1893 frequent allegations were made that the assisted system was giving rise to grave abuses, and the question of permitting or suppressing it had to be faced. There was great divergency both as to facts and opinions in the reports of the local authorities, and in the hope that the system would pave the way for a voluntary movement of labour to Assam, the Government of India came to the determination that it would be the wiser course to recognize and bring the assisted system within the law. An amending Act was accordingly passed in 1893, which included various other changes in the law

with the object of improving the position of the contracting labourer and strengthening the hands of the executive in dealing with fraudulent recruitment and unhealthy gardens. In assenting to the amending legislation Her Majesty's Government desired that after further experience a report should be submitted with special reference to the question whether the maximum term of labour contracts should not be reduced below its present limit of four years, and whether it was possible to abandon all exceptional legislation as to labour in the tea districts. These reports have been received and are now under consideration. On the latter point opinions are unanimous that it is essential in the common interests of the planters and labourers that the principle of the existing law should be maintained. The other important issues which have to be dealt with are (1) the future attitude of Government towards assisted emigration; (2) the abolition or retention of local labour contracts, that is, of contracts made in the labour districts and not in the district of recruitment; and (3) the reduction of the term of labour contracts and increase of the minimum wage. It is not improbable that, upon the evidence which has been accumulating during the past five years, it will be necessary to reconsider the steps taken in 1893 in regard to assisted emigration, and to exclude the speculative labour broker with his crimping and kidnapping proclivities from all connection with it.

Principal papers referred to:—

- Despatch No. 45, dated 13th August 1895, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 93, dated 31st October 1895, from Secretary of State.
- Resolution No. 465, dated 25th March 1896.
- Despatch No. 29, dated 2nd June 1896, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 11, dated 28th February 1894, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 32, dated 26th March 1896, from Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 31, dated 9th June 1896, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 12, dated 4th March 1896, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 32, dated 9th June 1896, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 15, dated 10th March 1898, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 29, dated 22nd May 1894, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 72, dated 2nd August 1894, from Secretary of State.
- Letter No. 2509, dated 17th September 1894, to the Governor of Natal.
- Despatch No. 31, dated 23rd May 1895, from Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 42, dated 30th July 1895, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 5, dated 22nd January 1896, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 92, dated 8th October 1896, from Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 1, dated 6th January 1897, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 79, dated 11th November 1897, to Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XIII.

ARTS, MANUFACTURES, AND ECONOMIC PRODUCTS.

*Arts and
manufactures.*

141. In regard to arts and manufactures the opportunities of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture for useful and effective action are limited. The subject of artistic and technical education does not come within its province, and in other directions there are few possibilities of Government intervention with beneficial results. The Department has, however, been able to give some encouragement and assistance to industries, both artistic and commercial, through the agency of museums and exhibitions and by publishing information regarding them.

*The action of
Government.*

142. In 1883 a scheme was initiated for maintaining in each provincial museum a typical collection of the arts and manufactures of the province, to which in some instances a sale-room was added. At the same time an enquiry was commenced into the character and circumstances of each art industry, and an Illustrated Indian Art Journal was started under Government patronage for the publication of the information collected. Arrangements were also made for rendering available, in a cheap form under the title of "The Technical Art Series," large scale drawings of antique ornamental and decorative work collected by the Archæological Department. It was the aim of these measures to create a taste and demand for Indian art work, to preserve specimens of the best types of work, and to afford craftsmen the opportunity of studying them. The publications mentioned have been continued and the census or survey of industries is still in progress. During the period under review provincial officers have prepared and issued monographs on the following industries :—Brass and copper wares ; glass and pottery ; dyes and dyeing ; cotton fabrics ; woollen fabrics.

*The Lahore
Conference of 1893.*

143. In 1893 advantage was taken of an exhibition held at Lahore to assemble a conference of officers to discuss the constitution and work of Government Schools of Art, and its recommendations were invited on the subsidiary question whether any and what measures, beyond those already taken under the scheme of 1883, could usefully be adopted for promoting the interests of art industries and checking the deterioration which was becoming apparent in certain branches of art work. The report of the Conference was considered in 1896 ; but beyond a few suggestions for improving the management of local museums, and instituting local show-rooms, which were commended to the attention of the provincial authorities, the conference was unable to make any practical proposals within the scope of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture.

Exhibitions.

144. In the matter of exhibitions the Government of India have taken no prominent part in any since the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886. That occasion was employed to assist in the general survey and exposition of Indian arts, industries and economic products. But so far as the latter are concerned these duties now belong to the special Department of Economic Products in India and the Imperial Institute in England. The present policy of the Government of India

is to abstain from any official participation in foreign exhibitions. They are willing to give publicity to all rules, regulations and prospectuses relating to them, and in cases where advertizement and display are likely to foster any particular trade or industry of the country, to assist private effort by the grant of subsidies, free space, and the like. But they have resolved not to take any active part in such exhibitions except for very special reasons. Acting on this decision they have during the past five years declined invitations to join in the Antwerp Exhibition of 1894, the Bordeaux Exhibition of 1895, the National Hungarian Exhibition of 1896, the Brussels Exhibition of 1897, the Omaha Exhibition of 1898 and the Paris Exhibition of 1900. In the case of the Antwerp Exhibition some specimens of timber were contributed by the State Forest Department, and following the precedent of the Chicago Exhibition of 1893, free space and a contribution towards expenses, but on a much smaller scale, were granted to private exhibitors of tobacco, coffee and art ware.

145. The reasons for the present attitude of the Government of India towards foreign exhibitions were explained at length to the Secretary of State when declining the invitation to participate in the forthcoming Paris Exhibition—a decision which has received his approval. It was pointed out that the benefits which India, as an exporter mainly of raw material, is likely to reap from foreign exhibitions is small, while participation in them on a scale befitting the position and importance of the country entails not only considerable expense but serious interference with the ordinary duties of the officers of Government. The chief commercial staples of India are well known raw products, and she is not sufficiently advanced industrially either to exhibit or be interested in new processes or manufactures. “Such manufactured articles,” it was stated, “as are produced, suitable for exhibition in Europe, are either in the hands of capitalists whose enterprise needs no stimulus and but little assistance from Government, such as tea and tobacco, or are articles of purely artistic value which, while beautiful and interesting, are so absolutely without importance from a commercial point of view, that any considerable expenditure of public money upon their display would be unjustifiable”. To these arguments may be added the fact that there are now large firms dealing in Indian art-wares, which makes it less necessary than formerly that Government should interest itself directly in their exploitation. The representation of India at the Paris Exhibition of 1900 will therefore, under present arrangements, be left to private enterprise and the Royal Commission; but in order to mark their sense of a munificent private offer made to the Royal Commission to guarantee the cost of the Indian buildings at the exhibition, Lord Elgin’s Government have, at the suggestion of the Secretary of State, so far modified their original intention as to arrange for the display of Indian minerals and forest products by the Geological and Forest Departments, and a grant of Rs. 35,000 has been sanctioned for the purpose.

146. To the Reporter on Economic Products and the Imperial Institute belongs, as already observed, the duty of investigating the

Attitude of the Government towards foreign exhibitions explained.

Economic products. Scheme of investigation.

economic resources of the country. The first step taken by the Department in this direction was the compilation of a digest or dictionary of all existing information readily available regarding each economic product. The work, begun in 1884, was completed in 1892 and it has cleared the way for organized investigation. A working plan for the future was laid down in 1894, which has for its main object the gradual accumulation by the Reporter, assisted by the officials of the Agricultural and Forest Departments, of fresh materials for the revision of the dictionary. All new facts and information are ledgered in the Reporter's office and, if of current interest and importance, are published in a classified series of pamphlets which are widely circulated amongst commercial institutions and the trading community. As the principal duty of the Reporter will, for some time to come, be the collection and collation of new facts and statistics, he has, as a tentative measure, been placed in general charge of the Economic Section of the Indian Museum with which his work is at the present stage closely associated. For it is a part of the scheme that the arrangement of the Museum specimens should be brought into correspondence with the dictionary which will thus serve the purpose of a descriptive catalogue. A duplicate set of specimens is maintained at the Imperial Institute, and the collection of fresh samples rests with the Reporter's department which selects annually some twenty commercial products for special investigation. These investigations, so far as they involve scientific analysis and experiment, are for the most part conducted by the Research Branch of the Imperial Institute, as the Reporter's department is not at present fully equipped for such work.

*Relations with the
Imperial Institute.*

147. It will be gathered that the aim of the Government of India is to shape the organization described into a commercial enquiry and intelligence bureau, with offices in India and London, which will be of utility to the commercial community and attract attention to the resources of the country. To make the Imperial Institute an efficient instrument in the scheme Lord Elgin's Government found it necessary to claim a larger share of control over the management of the Indian section of that Institution, and the question how control could best be exercised has, after a somewhat lengthy correspondence with the Secretary of State, been satisfactorily settled. The administration of the Indian section, so far as it concerns the exhibition of samples, the conduct of correspondence, and similar matters now rest (subject to the general rules of the Institute) in the hands of a Sub-Committee appointed by and acting under the instructions of the Government of India. The Curator of the section is an official paid by the Government of India and subordinate to it through the Sub-Committee of which he is the Secretary. He corresponds directly with the Reporter in all matters relating to the collections, and his office is the repository of all information regarding them. The Committee report periodically to the Government of India on the work done in the Indian section and their report is published. An annual grant is made on these conditions from Indian revenues for the maintenance of the Indian section. A contribution is also made towards the expenses of the

Research Department which undertakes any analytical investigations of products which the Reporter, in consultation with the Director of the Insitute, may decide to be necessary, and the results of these investigations are published by the Institute and the Reporter. Under the new arrangements much useful work has already been accomplished in spreading information regarding the less known products of the country, and it is hoped that as the organization of the two institutions in India and the United Kingdom developes and becomes better known their utility will be more generally appreciated.

Principal papers referred to :—

Despatch No. 2, dated 6th January 1897, to Secretary of State.

Resolution No. 34, dated 10th July 1894.

Despatch No. 60, dated 10th October 1894, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 57, dated 23rd October 1895, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 37, dated 7th July 1896, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 45, dated 29th June 1897, to Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XIV.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

*Archæological duties
undertaken by
Government.*

148. It was explained in the summary of the Administration of Lord Lansdowne that the Archæological work undertaken by Government was of three kinds, survey, conservation and the collection and decipherment of ancient inscriptions, or epigraphy. In regard to the first it was stated that the survey of the more interesting and important regions had practically been completed by the investigation carried out between the years 1862 and 1889 by the Archæological staff under Sir A. Cunningham and Dr. Burgess, that the survey parties had been reduced to three in 1890 and that their further retention was to be reconsidered in 1895, the Secretary of State having expressed a wish that the direct connection of the State with the work of Archæological Survey should, throughout India, cease from the end of that year. The question whether it was practicable and advisable for Government to dissociate itself from archæological research thus came under the early consideration of Lord Elgin's administration. After a full discussion of the subject with local Governments and the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the Government of India were forced to the conclusion that there is still much work which should be done by the State and which may rightly be included amongst its responsibilities; and that moreover to withdraw from Archæological research would lay the Administration open to general condemnation in scientific circles. In this conclusion the Government of India were supported by the unanimous opinion of several eminent antiquarians and orientalists, and by the expressed inability of the Asiatic Society to carry out Lord Cross' suggestion that they should undertake the superintendence and control of future explorations assisted by a subvention from Government.

*Programme for the
future.*

149. But although satisfied that State direction and control must be maintained, the Government of India were convinced that the principal object of the official archæological establishment should henceforward be conservation and not antiquarian research. In the past attention had been too exclusively devoted to the detailed examination and historical discussion of famous monuments while no record had been kept of the fast disappearing relics of less note. The necessities of other branches of science of more importance to the material interests of the country precluded any large expenditure on archæology, and it appeared to the Government of India that the small archæological staff which they could afford to maintain permanently should devote itself primarily to completing a record of all ancient remains, selecting those to be preserved from further decay, and assisting and advising the Department of Public Works with reference to their conservation; and that to private individuals and learned societies should be left the work of critical examination and research. For this purpose the Government would be ready to offer all facilities, and they hoped that, when once it was understood that the Government

would rigidly confine itself to the conservation of existing material, private workers in the field of archæology would be willing to come forward and investigate it.

150. It is on these lines that proposals have been submitted to the Secretary of State. They provide for the formation of the several provinces of India proper into five circles with an archæological surveyor and small office to each. Burma stands outside the scheme and is provided for by a separate annual grant of Rs. 10,000 to be placed at the disposal of the local Government for expenditure on archæology. In addition to the duties already alluded to, the archæological surveyors will be charged with the business of collecting coins and inscriptions, and with the supervision of any excavations conducted on behalf of Government, or with its permission, by competent private explorers who, it is intended, should be offered every possible encouragement and assistance in prosecuting this undeveloped branch of archæological research.

*Reorganization of
the Archæological
Department.*

151. In regard to the decipherment and publication of ancient inscriptions similar considerations have prevailed, and the epigraphical expert whose appointment was temporary has now been retained on a permanent tenure. The periodical publication of facsimiles and translations of all inscriptions collected by Government agency will be continued, and in deference to strongly urged official and non-official opinion, the series of reports of the Archæological Department will also be carried on for the publication of the results of any original researches which the archæological surveyors may be able to make without interruption of their regular duties. The cost of the whole scheme will, it is estimated, not exceed the sum of Rs. 1,00,000 a year.

*Inscriptions and
Publications.*

152. From what has been said it will be understood that, while recognizing the duty of Government to discover and preserve the ancient monuments and inscriptions of the country, it has been the aim of Lord Elgin's administration to endeavour to secure a larger measure of that private co-operation which has contributed so materially to the advancement of archæological science in other countries, and there is reason to anticipate that this aim will be realized. Already proposals have been made by an international Congress of Orientalists for the establishment of an International Association for archæological research in India. This proposal has been heartily welcomed by Lord Elgin, and his Government have informed the Secretary of State that the proposed association, if constituted, will receive every assistance in their power. They have found it necessary however to stipulate that no exploration should be undertaken without their consent, and that all objects of archæological or historical importance discovered should be treated as government property. On the latter point it may be necessary to lay down some rules and regulations, and possibly to amend or supplement the Treasure Trove Act (VI of 1878), in order to secure to the Government ample power to acquire such objects or to prevent their sale or removal. Recent indication of a growing trade in archæological curios, and the unauthorized appropriation of sculptures

*Private co-operation
in archæological
research.*

discovered across the frontier. have shown the need of some such measure, but before taking any action the Government of India await the receipt from the Secretary of State of information as to the law and practice in other countries.

*Work of the past
five years.*

153. Turning to the archæological work accomplished during the past five years the first in interest and importance has undoubtedly been the discovery in the Nepal Terai of the true site of the long lost city of Kapilavastu, the birthplace of Buddha Sakya Muni. The ruins are being excavated by the Nepal Durbar under the advice of the Archæological Surveyor, North-Western Provinces, who has published one monograph on the subject. Interesting Buddhist remains and inscriptions have also been discovered in Swat on the north-west frontier, and several collections of manuscripts in unknown character, coins, seals and other relics unearthed in the sand buried cities of Khotan in Central Asia, which are now engaging the attention of antiquarians, have been acquired by frontier officers for the Government of India and are under examination by Dr. Hoernle of the Educational Department, who has been placed on special duty for the purpose. Besides the usual annual reports on the progress of archæological operations, and the quarterly official journal of epigraphy, several special volumes have been published, chief amongst which are "The Moghal Architecture of Fatehpur Sikri", a profusely illustrated monograph on the carvings and decorations which adorn the buildings of Akbar's capital; "The Muhammadan Architecture of Guzerat," the first of a series of reports which Dr. Burgess, the late Director of the Archæological Department, undertook to edit; and two handsome volumes of coloured and other illustrations of the mural paintings of the famous Ajanta Caves. Considerable progress has also been made with the provincial lists of antiquarian remains. The list for the Central Provinces and Berar has been published, and one has been compiled for the Nizam's territory by the Archæological Surveyor for Western India, whose services were lent for a short period to the Nizam's Government. The lists for Burma, Punjab, Rajputana and Central India are in various stages of completion.

Principal papers referred to:—

Despatch No. 31, dated 16th June 1898, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 13, dated 31st March 1898, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 39, dated 14th July 1898, to Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XV.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND MINERALS.

154 When the Department of Revenue and Agriculture assumed administrative control of the Geological Survey Department it was found that although the staff of officers employed was, compared with that of any other department of scientific work, an exceptionally strong one, attention was almost exclusively confined to the purely scientific side of geological exploration to the neglect of practical research. Strata and rocks were examined and mapped, but only incidentally was attention drawn to the mineral resources which they contained. It was accordingly determined to definitely place upon the Department of Geology the responsibility for a detailed survey of the mineral resources of the country, and in the reorganization which followed on the report of the Public Service Commission the constitution of the department was revised upon this basis. Out of a cadre of sixteen appointments, three were reserved for practical work, leaving, besides the Director and a Palæontologist, eleven officers for purely scientific geological enquiry. Two of the reserved appointments were set aside for the employment of temporary special lists in accordance with the advice of the Commission; and in order to introduce an element of practical training into the Department generally, the new rules of recruitment required that candidates should undergo one or two years' training in mines or laboratories as might be required by the Government of India. By this arrangement the Geological Survey has been brought within the general scheme of practical scientific enquiry without extra expense to the State, and without neglect or interruption of its primary duty of studying the geological formations, upon a knowledge of which the successful investigation of mineral products must depend.

*The Geological
Survey Department.*

155. The first use made of the specialist appointments was the engagement of a mining expert who was deputed to verify the reputed existence of gold in payable quantities in Chota Nagpur. His work proved inconclusive and was abandoned on his sudden resignation of the appointment, but the experience gained has been useful in showing the precautions needed to secure better results in future. Meanwhile a programme of operations for several years has been laid down for the geological staff, which provides for the continuous prosecution of both classes of work—scientific and practical—upon a definite plan. Under this programme the mineral examination of the Madras Presidency has been taken up in succession to Burma where the principal coal, oil and mineral deposits have already been investigated and reported on. During the five years under review, the practical work of the Department comprised enquiries into the occurrence of gold, rubies, coal, earth-oil, and steatite in various parts of Burma; gold, corundum, magnesites, and iron ores in the Madras Presidency; coal in Beluchistan, Central India, and the Central Provinces, and oil in Sind.

*Economic
investigation of
minerals.*

Publications.

156. The Department has also commenced a series of monographs embodying the results of its researches into each group of Indian minerals, and a digest of all existing information regarding them. This work when completed will constitute a survey of economic geology, and fulfil for Indian minerals what the Dictionary referred to in Chapter XIII has done for Indian economic products generally. The first number of the series dealing with corundum has been recently published. There is also published annually by the Reporter on Economic Products, with the assistance of the Geological Department, a review of the mineral production of India which gives the latest information regarding mineral deposits, outturn of mines and mining and prospecting concessions.

Scientific work.

157. On its scientific side the Department has made important additions to the knowledge of the structural geology of India, and devoted special attention to petrological studies. Its report in the great Gohna landslip of 1893 in the Kumaon Hills was of practical as well as scientific value, and another interesting problem with which it has had to deal has been the origin and mode of occurrence of the destructive earthquake which visited Assam and Bengal in June 1897. In consequence of this visitation arrangements are now being carried out to establish properly equipped seismological observatories at several stations.

Rules for mining and prospecting.

158. If the action of the Government of India in associating practical exploration with scientific research needed any justification it is to be found in the increasing extent to which the attention of prospectors and capitalists is being attracted to the mineral resources of the country. Within the past four years over two hundred and thirty mining leases and prospecting licenses have been issued for coal, oil, mica, graphite, gold and other minerals. To facilitate the disposal of applications for concessions a set of rules was drawn up in 1893 for the grant by local Governments of mining leases and licenses to explore and prospect. These rules were promulgated in the following year after approval by the Secretary of State. They define the powers of local Governments and are intended to secure uniformity of practice and principle; and also to prevent the necessity of continual references to the Government of India for instructions in matters of detail. They indicate generally to prospectors and others interested in mining enterprise the terms on which they may obtain licenses and leases, without the inconvenience and delay involved by reference to higher authority; but they are not in any way intended to restrict the freedom of local Governments in proposing the grant of a concession on more liberal terms in particular cases. To enable the Government of India to meet such exceptional cases supplementary and confidential rules have been framed with the sanction of the Secretary of State.

Mineral concessions in Native States.

159. The general rules though intended primarily for British territory are also followed in dealing with applications for mineral concessions in Native States, so far as this can be done without undue limitation of the authority of the Durbars or interference with the internal economy of States. In both British and Native territory the

Government of India have found it necessary, in order to protect the public from fraudulent speculation, to lay down that all proposed mining transactions with companies, or with syndicates acting with a view to the formation of companies, should be referred for their decision.

160. The attitude of Government in regard to the transfer of min- *Transfer of concessions to jointstock companies.*
ing leases to companies has given rise to much discussion, and has been criticised as needlessly cautious and discouraging to mining enterprise. It was very carefully reconsidered by Lord Elgin in Council in 1897 and a despatch on the subject (to which a reply is awaited) was addressed to the Secretary of State. With every desire to promote the investment of capital in the mining industry, and while fully alive to the difficulties of safe-guarding the investing public without embarrassing honest enterprise, the Government of India have been unable to recommend any material change of policy. "We feel," the Government of India have said in their despatch, "that the position of the Supreme Government as proprietor of all minerals throughout the greater part of India, and as guardian of the interests of a number of native states which, if unprotected, offer a most attractive field to the unscrupulous speculator, imposes upon it a special responsibility which it is impossible to disregard. We feel that we are bound so far as in us lies to prevent a repetition of the scandals to which we have already alluded; that we should not be justified in leaving the native capitalists, and still less the native states of India, to the mercy of the European mining market operating upon concessions obtained from ourselves or from Durbars that are subject to our control. We think therefore that we must retain in our own hands the power of sanction, but that we should at the same time render the manner of its exercise as certain and the conditions to be enacted as simple as the nature of the case permits."

161. The Government of India have accordingly proposed to insert *Proposed restriction and conditions.*
in the mining rules a statement of the conditions on which they will ordinarily be prepared to accord sanction to the transfer of a mining lease to a registered company. Briefly these conditions are, that before a company is floated there must be adequate and *bonâ fide* investigation into the value of the mine; that the prospectus must be submitted to government before issue, must contain a full and fair statement of fact regarding the ascertained value of the property, and must not commit government in any way; that the price paid to promoters for the concession must not be excessive; and that the promoters must retain their stake in the company for a period of not less than eighteen months from the date the company is registered or the transfer is made, whichever is later. Some further amendments of the rules have also been suggested, including an alteration of the royalty leviable on gold which is at present fixed at $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the gross outturn. This has been represented to be a prohibitive rate, and after considering the regulations and practice in other countries, the Government of India have proposed to levy it on net profits instead of on the gross outturn.

162. Another important matter connected with the mining in- *Regulations of Mines.*
dustry with which Lord Elgin's Administration has had to deal, is the

inspection and regulation of mining operations. This question was pressed upon the attention of the Government of India by the Secretary of State after the Berlin Labour Conference of 1890, and they were called upon to consider the advisability of undertaking legislation for the inspection of mines and for the regulation of the employment therein of women, young persons, and children. After considering the views of local Governments the Government of India decided that before taking any action it was advisable to obtain a further knowledge of the conditions of labour in Indian mines, and the services of one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Mines in England were obtained for the purpose of inspecting the mines and suggesting what regulations were necessary for the protection of the miners. His reports satisfied the Government of India that some regulation of the working and sanitation of mines was necessary, and a Committee, including representatives of the mercantile and mining interest, was then appointed to consider the whole subject and frame rules and suggestions for legislation. Their report was received in 1896 and circulated for opinion to provincial authorities, mine owners and managers whose replies are now before the Government of India. In proceeding thus deliberately with the consideration of the question Lord Elgin's Government have been anxious that, in a matter which so intimately affects numerous interests, many of them small ones, and which is essentially a matter of detail of a highly technical nature, there should be the fullest opportunities of discussion and criticism, and that the measures finally decided upon should, as far as possible, be acceptable to mine owners.

Proposed legislation.

163. The problem which the Government of India have to solve is one of some difficulty. This being the first attempt at the regulation of the working of Indian mines, the light of previous experience is wanting, and they have to consider how far and in what respects the measures enforced in European countries may be adapted to the widely different conditions prevailing in India without stifling a nascent industry. The variety of mines to be dealt with and the local peculiarities of the system of working and labour in vogue in the various classes of mines add to the intricacy of the task. It has to be considered how the regulations which are essential in the case of large mines may best be relaxed in favour of small ones so as to prevent their being ruinously burdensome and at the same time to secure the necessary protection to their workmen. Another important question is the extent to which restrictions should be imposed on the employment of women and children underground, which is an integral part of the family-gang system of labour commonly adopted. The objects which the Government of India desire to aim at are *firstly* to afford full protection to the mining population in all matters in which they have a reasonable claim to protection; *secondly*, to limit interference as far as may be possible consistently with the attainment of that object; and, *thirdly*, to pay due regard to the interests and possibilities of small mines and native owners. To secure these objects it will be necessary to pass an empowering Act, giving Government wide powers of rule-making, and to frame rules suitable to the different classes of mines. A permanent Inspector of Mines will also be needed, and the Government of

India with the sanction of the Secretary of State have already appointed to that office the official whose services were obtained to carry out the preliminary enquiries.

Principal papers referred to :—

Despatch No 74, dated 21st October 1897, to Secretary of State.

Resolution No. 10, dated 9th October 1896

Despatch No. 51, dated 21st October 1896, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 159, dated 10th December 1896, from Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XVI.

METEOROLOGY.

*Constitution of
the Indian
Meteorological
Department.*

164. The Indian Meteorological Department, though of comparatively recent creation, having been formed in 1874, is already a well organized and equipped weather intelligence bureau with reporting stations spread over a vast sea and continental area, and its publications have a recognized position in the scientific world. It is also, considering the extent of its operations, the most economically administered scientific department of the Indian Government. There are only three officers, of whom the Director is one, who are paid exclusively for meteorological work; the remainder of the supervising staff consists of officers of other departments, who, in some cases, receive an allowance for meteorological duties. Similarly, the observers are for the most part subordinate officials of other departments who are remunerated by a small addition to their regular pay. Meteorological data are received from over 200 stations distributed between the coast of Africa on one side and the Chinese frontier on the other; there are also over 2,000 stations scattered over the Indian continent which record only rainfall. A careful system of inspection and test is carried out to ensure the accuracy of observations, and every opportunity is seized to extend and perfect them. Private co-operation is encouraged by the loan of instruments, and the number of non-official observatories, including those established by Native States, is now considerable. To outside sources of information the department is indeed largely indebted for its knowledge of the conditions obtaining over extensive regions where no official observatories exist. Particularly is this the case as regards the state of the snowfall in the higher Himalayas and the meteorology of the Indian seas, both of which have an important bearing in the annual weather phenomena of the Indian continent.

*The work of the
Department.*

165. An idea of the ordinary work of the department may be gathered from an enumeration of its principal publications. These are a daily weather report, table and chart for the whole of India and local ones for the maritime provinces; a weekly and monthly weather review; an Indian monsoon area daily weather report and chart compiled from ships' logs; Indian meteorological memoirs or scientific discussions of observations; seasonal forecasts of the monsoon and winter rains. The first and last are of great utility in current administration in keeping Government fully and promptly acquainted with the progress and probabilities of the periodical rains on which Indian agriculture is so largely dependent. Various special observations are also conducted by the department in connection with temperature, sunshine, solar and terrestrial radiation, etc., and it has recently at the instance of the International Meteorological Committee undertaken investigations into the direction of the motion and height of clouds.

*Storm and flood
warnings.*

166. Other important duties of the department are the despatch of storm warnings to the ports, and of flood warning and weather forecasts to district officers, to canal and public works officers, and to military

expeditions and camps of exercise. A quite recent development of this branch of the work has been the supply of weather warnings to indigo and tea planters, and a beginning has thus been made in utilizing meteorological observations in local agriculture which may some day assume dimensions of importance.

167. Sufficient has been said to show that the Government of India now possess a meteorological bureau which for completeness and efficiency will bear comparison with any similar European institution. Its practical usefulness to the administration, especially in times of famine, and to the public at all times, is very great; through its means the administration is enabled to watch day by day the distribution of the annual rainfall and gauge its probable effects upon agricultural prospects, while the public are warned of the occurrence of destructive storms and floods. The position of the Meteorological Department in the general scheme of scientific enquiry planned by the Department of Revenue and Agriculture will be found explained in the Resolution of 20th March 1897 referred to in Chapter II.

Value of the Department to Government and the Public.

168. For the high efficiency to which the department has attained the Government of India are in great measure indebted to the unremitting exertions of the present Director. During the period under review there has been no occasion for any material changes in its work, but its organization has been improved in various directions at his suggestion and the area of observation has been steadily enlarged as opportunity offered. A uniform system of storm signals has been introduced for all Indian ports and supplemented by a system of communicating, by means of flags, the latest information respecting weather to outward-bound ships passing certain stations on the coast of the Bay of Bengal. Arrangements have also been made to carry on the storm warning service on Sundays as on week days and for accelerating the transmission of telegraphic weather messages generally. And for the better forecasting of the probable strength of the south-west monsoon winds and rain-wave in June, special information is obtained by cable from the African Coast and Mauritius. Proposals are now under consideration for further improving and extending observations, for training and employing natives of India in the higher work of the Department, and for completing, before the present director retires from office, the scientific discussion of the meteorological data which have been accumulated.

Improvements during past five years.

The head of the department is not only Meteorological Reporter to Government, but also its scientific adviser in all matters pertaining to physical research, and he has been largely concerned in shaping a scheme under which the isolated astronomical and magnetical observatories at Madras and Bombay respectively are being organized into a national institution, under imperial control, for the study of astronomy, solar physics, and terrestrial magnetism.

Position of the Meteorological Reporter in regard to physical research.

169. Hitherto solar photography and actinometric observations have been carried out at Dehra and Simla, astronomical observations at Madras, and magnetic observations at Bombay. Though dealing with

Astronomical and solar observatories.

cognate branches of science, these observatories have worked without any central guidance or co-operation, and the main object of the scheme is to remove these defects and to give a further extension to the investigation of solar physics and terrestrial magnetism. For this purpose a new observatory is in course of construction at Kodaikanal in the Palni Hills, Madras Presidency, the climatic conditions of which are specially favourable, and it is proposed to concentrate work there under two officers—one of whom will be designated Director of Solar Physics and the other Director of the Magnetic Survey of India, the Madras astronomical and the Bombay magnetic observatories being retained as subordinate institutions. The scheme has not yet been fully carried out pending the completion of the Kodaikanal building and the consideration by the Government of India of the recently received recommendations of the Observatories Committee—a standing Committee appointed by the Royal Society, by whom the working of the Indian scientific observatories is under special arrangements annually brought under review. The Government of India have lately also had the advantage of a personal inspection the observatories by two of the leading members of the Committee—the Astronomer Royal and Sir J. N. Lockyer—during their visit to India in 1898 to observe the total solar eclipse.

*Privately endowed
observatories.*

170. In conclusion it may be noted that there are, in addition to the government observatories, two private or semi-private institutions for the prosecution of astronomical research, from which co-operation in the general scheme may be expected. One of these is attached to the Poona College of Science and owes its establishment to the liberality of a native chief, the late Maharaja of Bhawnagar. It has recently at the instance of the Solar Physics Committee, London, undertaken the observation of the spectra of sun spots. The other, located in the Vizagapatam district, and known as the Jugga Rao Astronomical and Meteorological Observatory, has recently been made over to Government as a trust, with an endowment of three lakhs of rupees, and is managed by a Committee appointed by Government, who arrange its work in consultation with the Government Astronomer, Madras, and the Meteorological Reporter to the Government of India.

Principal papers referred to :—

Despatch No 56, dated 1st September 1897, to Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XVII.

FOREST CONSERVANCY.

171. As regards forest conservancy, there has been no departure from the policy adhered to under previous administrations the object of which is thus described in the summary relating to Lord Lansdowne's term of office, *viz.*, to place all kinds of forest produce within easy reach of the people, and to maintain in perpetuity, so far as it is possible to do so, an area of forest in each locality sufficient for the present and prospective requirements of the country and especially of the agricultural classes. *The policy of Government.*

172. At the beginning of 1894 the area of forest reserves amounted to 67,000 square miles, that of protected forests to 34,000 square miles, with 26,000 square miles of unclassified forests; bringing the total of the State forest property to 127,000 square miles. At the end of 1898 this total amounted to 160,700 square miles, comprising 88,200 square miles of reserved, 8,700 square miles of protected, and 63,800 square miles of unclassified forests. *Area of State Forests.*

173. An important stage in the history of forest conservancy was marked by the declaration of the policy of Government in a public Resolution, No. 22-F., dated 19th October 1894. This Resolution declares that the sole object of the State forest administration is the benefit of the public, comprising the whole body of tax-payers, on the one hand, and, on the other, the people whose customary use of any forest area has to be regulated or restricted in order to ensure a conservative treatment of such area, either in their own interests in securing a permanency of such user, or on account of an adequate general public benefit. It is next laid down that previously existing customs and user shall only be restricted and regulated to the degree necessary to secure these advantages. *The Resolution of 1894.*

174. The Resolution next details under four broad classes of forests the degree of interference indicated in the settlement and future management of State forests. It states that (a) when the preservation is essential on climatic or physical grounds, private interests must give way to the more important public ones; that (b) where forests are of considerable commercial value, they should be treated on these lines as sources of revenue to the State, but that in these cases the needs of communities dwelling on the margin of such tracts should form the first consideration, that no restrictions not needed for sylvicultural reasons should be imposed on previous rights of user, and that questions of mere money returns should even in the future working-schemes be subordinated to the supply in the first instance of the needs in forest produce of the surrounding population either free of charge or at non-competition rates; that (c) when the forests are only needed to supply produce for local consumption, the restrictions imposed should be solely based on actual requirements, not merely of the right-holders but of the surrounding population generally, and that they should be worked in such a manner as to supply forest produce to the greatest

advantage and convenience of the people, and at the lowest rates compatible with conservative management; that (d) on treeless pasture grounds the satisfaction of the wants of local communities should as a rule outweigh the interests of the general public, both as regards settlement and future management, the public interests, however, being safe-guarded by the Government maintaining a right to levy moderate grazing dues in all cases when its remission is not conceded as a right. The Resolution also lays down that in cases where an effective demand exists for culturable land, and where land suitable for *permanent* cultivation can be supplied from forest areas, such land should ordinarily be relinquished in forests of classes (c) and (d) and even of class (b), provided that (1) the pressure of the population upon the soil is such as to render such relinquishment necessary; that (2) it does not lead to the honeycombing of valuable forests by patches of cultivation; that (3) the physical conditions of the areas to be relinquished are such as to render them suitable for permanent cultivation and not make them subject to sterilization and destruction of the soil; that (4) the cultivation must not be merely nominal and an excuse for the creation of pastoral or semi-pastoral villages; that (5) the minimum area of forests which is needed in order to supply the general forest needs of the country or the reasonable forest requirements, present or prospective, of the neighbourhood in which the areas proposed to be relinquished are situated is not encroached upon.

175. The Resolution also recommends for the consideration of local Governments the abandonment as forest areas of fuel and fodder reserves and of grazing areas pure and simple, especially of those lying in the midst of cultivated tracts, or at least their transformation into protected forests. It was only in Madras and Bombay that the reservation of lands falling within this category had taken place, and in the former Presidency all areas below one square mile in extent, the retention of which was not advisable for special reasons, have since been disforested, resulting naturally in a certain permanent loss of forest revenue. A somewhat more serious reduction in revenue was experienced in the Central Provinces, where the local administration considered it advisable and decided to lower the rates for grazing, timber, fuel and bamboos. In all other provinces, the Resolution of 1894 being merely a confirmation of their previous policy, no important changes were required.

Forest Settlements.

176. Forest settlements are still in progress, chiefly in Upper Burma, where areas of considerable extent have still to be dealt with, and in Madras. In all other provinces they are practically completed or are nearing completion. In many cases the work now being done is merely a revision of previous settlements. The most important step which has taken place in this direction during Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty was the selection, with a view to final excision and disforestation, of lands fit for permanent self-supporting cultivation, which had been included in the reserves of the Central Provinces. These areas were doubtless the unqualified property of the State, and were taken

charge of when no urgent demand for cultivation existed. Circumstances have since changed, and the settlement of the *bonâ fide* cultural lands can, as they are very extensive, be only beneficial. The step may result in a further temporary fall of forest revenue, but this will be more than balanced by an increase in land revenue, and must finally lead to the creation of new markets for forest-produce as well.

177. The permanent demarcation of forest areas acquired has made great progress, and in many provinces is nearing completion. After forest settlements and demarcation, the survey forms the next important step in the permanent constitution of State forest property. Greater strides than ever have been made in this direction, and 24,600 square miles were added during the five years of Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty to the areas scientifically surveyed. *Demarcation and Survey.*

178. Systematic management also shows a satisfactory increase, 14,000 square miles having been added to the area treated under regular working-plans, and but few areas are exploited without a plan of operations. Fire-protection, by special measures, of areas subject to annual conflagration has been largely extended and covers now 35,200 square miles, and considerable progress has of late years been made in protecting large areas by interesting the people of the country in the success. *Management and Fire protection.*

179. The area of plantations has been increased by 28,700 acres. Of these, 16,500 acres represent the increase in teak plantations in Burma, which now amount to 45,000 acres. These and the Nilambur teak plantation in Madras are the most valuable undertaking in this direction and represent a considerable and growing capital. *Plantations.*

180. The average annual outturn of forest-produce during Lord Elgin's tenure of office amounted to 15,239,000 cubic feet of timber and fuel, 136,512,000 bamboos, and minor produce including grass and grazing of the value of Rs. 33,72,000. The average annual receipts amounted to Rs. 1,71,63,200, whilst for the whole period the gross receipts amounted to Rs. 8,58,16,189. The total expenditure for the same period amounted to Rs. 4,49,60,671, leaving a net revenue of Rs. 3,78,56,045. The net revenue amounts to 44 per cent. of the gross receipts. At the same time the population is estimated to have benefited by the use of forest-produce free or at reduced rates to the amount of Rs. 47 lakhs, or an average of Rs. 9,39,000 per annum. *Outturn of produce, receipts and expenditure.*

181. A scheme has been introduced under which effect is given to the gradual transfer of 20 per cent. of the upper controlling charges to members of the Provincial Service, without interfering with the vested rights of covenanted officers who passed into Cooper's Hill College previous to the late general reorganization. Advantage was taken of the more recent reorganization of the upper controlling staff in Burma to give a fair start to the scheme, and a considerable percentage of the new appointments were at once transferred to the Provincial Staff. As far as possible it was arranged, by transfers of officers, that other provinces participated in the opportunity offered. The Secretary of State's sanction was at last obtained to the reorganization of the *Organization of the Department.*

executive and protective establishments in all provinces except Bombay. There are now, in addition to 43 appointments of Extra-Deputy and Extra-Assistant Conservators, which are gradually replacing corresponding appointments in the Imperial Service, 91 Extra-Assistant Conservatorships, 433 Rangerships, 196 Deputy Rangerships and 9,337 posts of Foresters and Guards. The fact that the Ranger forms the best and only safe administrative unit has been fully recognized in the present reorganization. Further expansion in this direction may be needed in the future, but this is much cheaper than the multiplication of controlling posts.

*Burma Forest
School.
Loan of officers to
Siam.*

182. In order to provide technically trained men for the Executive Staff in Burma, our most important Forest province, the establishment of a Forest School has been sanctioned in that province.

183. The Government of India have by the loan of trained officers rendered considerable assistance to Siam in the matter of forest conservancy.

Principal papers referred to :—

- Resolution No. 22, dated 19th October 1894.
- Circular No. 24, dated 31st October 1894.
- Despatch No. 70, dated 28th November 1894, to Secretary of State.
- Resolution No. 17, dated 4th November 1896.
- Despatch No. 255, dated 3rd September 1895, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 124, dated 31st October 1895, from Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 305, dated 28th October 1896, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 170, dated 24th December 1896, from Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 28, dated 3rd February 1898, to Secretary of State.
- Despatch No. 47, dated 10th March 1898, from Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FISHERIES.

184. Although the fisheries of India, both sea and inland, are extensive and valuable, no serious attempt has yet been made to develop them with the assistance of commercial capital and enterprise, and they remain very inadequately represented in the trade returns of the country. But they have always constituted an important source of food to a large section of the inhabitants, and in view of the ever-increasing population, the protection and improvement of the fish supply has been regarded by Government as a matter of no small importance.

Importance of Fisheries to the Country.

185. Thirty years ago the Government determined to make a survey of the fisheries and Dr. Francis Day of the Madras Medical Service was deputed to enquire into their nature and extent, the economic value of the principal varieties of fish, their breeding habits, the methods of capture employed, and the measures necessary to prevent wasteful destruction. The valuable reports submitted by him form the basis of the action subsequently taken, and still constitute the standard works of reference on the subject. It is due to these investigations that canal weirs and dams are provided with proper facilities for the passage of migratory fish, and that in the waters in Government reserved forests some degree of protection is now afforded to breeding fish and small fry.

Dr Day's investigation.

186. One of Dr. Day's recommendations was the passing of a Fisheries Act, and in 1875 legislation was undertaken for Burma where fish forms a staple diet of the people and the fisheries are State property yielding a large revenue to Government. Proposals for legislation were also made by the Punjab, Bombay and Madras Governments. But in India proper fishing rights are for the most part undefined; in some cases they are the communal property of riparian villages or attached to the agricultural ownership of the soil, in others, and this is the largest class, they are enjoyed by the public without restriction. The existence of these customary and private rights; the absence of convincing evidence of a decrease in the fish supply; the danger of interference with the immemorial habits of the rural population, and other considerations caused further action to be postponed. In 1887, the matter was again pressed upon the attention of Government, and was discussed at a conference of agricultural officers in the following year, with the result that a draft Act was prepared by Mr. Thomas of the Madras Civil Service who had made a special study of the subject. This bill, however, was condemned by local Governments as unsuitable and unnecessarily elaborate, and it was not till 1893 that the Government of India were able to determine the lines on which general legislation should proceed. In the interval the Bengal Government had passed an Act (in 1889) for the prevention of poaching in private waters, and the Madras Government an Act (in 1892) for the protection of game and fish in the Nilgiris.

Protective measures.

Provisions of draft Bill.

187. The Bill drafted and introduced into the Imperial Legislative Council in 1893 was an adaptation and extension of the Madras and Bengal Acts and contained three distinct sets of provisions. In the first place it prohibited universally the use of explosives and poisons in the capture of fish; in the next it made general the protection afforded to private rights in Bengal; and in the third place it empowered local Governments to make rules for the regulation of fisheries in selected streams or other waters, the property of the State, and also in private waters with the consent of the owners.

Amendment introduced.

188. When Lord Elgin assumed office, the Bill was under circulation to local Governments for opinion, and its further consideration was deferred till the views of the Secretary of State were communicated in 1895. Several experienced officers who had criticised the Bill were opposed to the provisions making unauthorized fishing in private waters a punishable offence, and the Secretary of State also expressed the apprehension that they might "lead to confusion and undesirable litigation." At his suggestion a report was called for on the working of the Bengal Act from which the provisions had been borrowed, and ultimately Lord Elgin's government determined that the clauses dealing with the rights of private owners should be omitted, and the scope of the bill restricted to the original object of affording protection to fish from wanton or wasteful destruction. There appeared to be no evidence that the owners of private fisheries were in need of or desired protection, and the fact that the Bengal Act had to a great extent been inoperative seemed to show that there was no necessity to legislate for their protection elsewhere. On the other hand the opinions received contained numerous warnings that the unsolicited protection, which the Bill as introduced would give to owners, might seriously interfere with the privilege enjoyed in many parts of India by the poorer classes of fishing more or less freely in private waters, by suggesting to owners its suppression where the idea of suppression would not otherwise have occurred to them. The Government of India agreed with the criticism of the Bombay Government that "the application of a specific provision rendering persons fishing in private waters liable to a criminal penalty will certainly result in the setting up of innumerable claims to private rights in rivers, streams and tanks where none are now alleged, and lead to the institution of criminal prosecutions all over the country as the easiest way of getting their claims acknowledged * * * and will inevitably end in very undesirable curtailment of public rights and privileges now undisputed." The intervention of the police in matters so indefinite, the Government of India felt, would possibly lead to great oppression, and certainly to the harassment of multitudes of poor people in the exercise of customary practices which add largely to their comfort and are at present disputed by no one.

Act IV of 1897.

189. The law which was passed as Act IV of 1897 is thus, except in regard to the use of explosives and poisons, purely an enabling and empowering Act. It extends to all provinces except Burma, and to both sea and inland fisheries, and under it a local Government may

make rules for regulating in selected and specified Government waters, and, with the consent of owners, in private water, :—

- (a) the erection and use of fixed engines ;
- (b) the construction of weirs ;
- (c) the dimensions and kind of nets to be used and the modes of using them.

It may also prohibit all fishing in any specified water for a period not exceeding two years.

190. This is as far as Lord Elgin's Government have felt justified in moving for the protection of fisheries under present circumstances. *Difficulty of effective action.* The great difficulty in taking effective action lies in discovering waters unencumbered with private rights even for such experimental treatment as that contemplated in the new law. The great rivers in which the rights of the State are least likely to be disputed require little protection, as nature herself provides a close season during the rainy months when floods make the capture of fish difficult or impossible. It is in lakes, streams and watercourses where destructive fishing is carried on throughout the year and where protective measures are most needed, that customary rights stand in the way. It remains to be seen whether the expectation of the mover of the Bill that private riparian proprietors will come forward and co-operate with the State will be fulfilled, or whether it will become necessary, in order to secure the important purpose in view, to undertake further legislation for the purpose of expropriating private rights of fishery, or, possibly, even of asserting the supreme rights of the State.

191. Among other matters of minor importance connected with *Burma fisheries.* fisheries which have engaged attention during the past five years may be mentioned the revision of the rules under the Lower Burma Fisheries Act of 1875; the deputation of an officer to enquire into various questions affecting the administration of inland fisheries in Burma (a work upon which he is still engaged), and the investigation of the pearl banks of the Mergui Coast by an Australian expert. On the Coromandel Coast pearl fisheries have long been a regular source of revenue to Government, but it was not till 1892 that special attention was directed to the Mergui pearl beds, which yield chiefly mother of pearl, though pearls are also found in small quantity. They were reported on in 1894 by Mr. Jardine, an expert engaged in Queensland, and are now leased by Government and worked under special rules framed under the Burma Fisheries Act. Similar beds have been discovered on the coasts of Chittagong and the Andaman Islands, but so far as is known at present they are of no great value.

Principal papers referred to :—

Despatch No. 16, dated 16th May 1895, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 35, dated 1st September 1896, to Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XIX.

INVENTIONS AND DESIGNS.

*The workings of
Act V of 1888.*

192. The past five years have shown an increase, not numerically considerable but continuous, in the patents dealt with in the office for administering Act V of 1888, and there appears to be no reason for doubting that inventors are on the whole disposed to value the protection which the Indian law affords them, and that the material prosperity of the country has been aided by the introduction in certain industries of improved methods of manufacture fostered by the concession of exclusive privileges for a period of years. The desire to extend inventions to this country has been chiefly marked in the case of English and Colonial applicants.

Financial results.

193. The financial results of any quinquennium will always depend very largely upon the success of the manufactures previously protected, as the State profits only to a small extent during the first four years of an Indian patent. The fact, therefore, that the income has almost doubled since 1891, is rather a measure of the successful working of the Act in former years than an indication that the operations under it have greatly increased; but the rise in the number of applications from 236 in the year 1892, to a maximum of 460 in 1896, and the consequent certainty that during the next quinquennium there will be a proportionate increase in the number of the exclusive privileges which the holders will find it worth their while to keep alive by the punctual payment of renewal fees, may be regarded as an encouraging feature of the period under review.

*Administrative
reforms.*

194. Several measures of reform have been introduced during Lord Elgin's tenure of office, of which those mentioned below deserve notice.

It is a peculiarity of the Indian law that an inventor who has succeeded in his desire to protect a manufacture does not receive from the Government of India any deed of grant, or other such document of the nature of letters patent; and representations on this point were made by a leading society of agents in London and by others interested in such questions, urging that a more formal order than it had been the practice to issue at the time of granting leave under section 5 of the Act should be passed. After some consideration the Government of India decided to adopt a form, which without necessitating any amendment of the existing law, should serve as a complete charter of the acquisition of exclusive rights to use an invention, and therefore as a negotiable instrument.

The public had had not a little cause of complaint in regard to the unwieldy, untidy, and, at times, undecipherable documents and drawings which used to be filed under the Act in illustration of inventions, and the difficulties in consulting and examining the records of the Patents Office were becoming more considerable every year. A set of rules under the Act was therefore framed which required all papers and

annexures to be prepared in strict accordance with certain instructions based upon those in force in England but drawn up in a somewhat simpler form.

195. Rules have also been prescribed to enable the Secretary for Inventions and Designs to deal with imperfect applications. The Indian Act specifies certain conditions which must be complied with before an application can be deemed an application within the meaning of the law, but differs from the English Act in making no provision for the return of an imperfect document for amendment; and certain legal difficulties arose in connection with the existing practice of the office. The Secretary has now been vested with authority under the law to return, without first bringing on to the register of inventions such applications as may be found after a preliminary examination to be materially defective in respect of any of the specified requirements of the Act; while in the case of those which are defective in other but non-essential respects, his practice of returning them for amendment after entering them in the register has been given legal sanction.

Principal papers referred to :—

Despatch No. 157, dated 15th November 1894, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 60, dated 16th December 1896, to Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 17, dated 1st July 1897, from Secretary of State.

Despatch No. 8, dated 3rd February 1898, to Secretary of State.

CHAPTER XX.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES.

*Acts and Regulations
passed*

196 The following Acts and Regulations dealing with matters within the cognizance of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture were passed by the Governor General in Council under the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 and 1892 (24 and 25 Vict., c. 67 and 55 and 56 Vict., c. 14), and the Government of India Act, 1870 (33 Vict., c. 3), respectively, during the years 1894 to 1898 :—

1894.

Act I of 1894.—An Act to amend the law for the acquisition of land for public purposes and for companies.

Act XI of 1894.—An Act to amend the Lower Burma Village Act, 1889.

Regulation II of 1894.—A Regulation to amend the Coorg Land-Revenue and Village Service Regulation, 1893.

Regulation III of 1894.—A Regulation to amend the Upper Burma Land and Revenue Regulation, 1889.

Regulation IV of 1894.—A Regulation to amend the Upper Burma Village Regulation, 1887.

1895.

Act II of 1895.—An Act to amend the Burma Boundaries Act, 1880, with a view to protect all permanent survey marks erected or placed in the course of any survey executed by order of Government.

Act VI of 1895.—An Act to amend the Dekkhan Agriculturists' Relief Acts 1879 to 1886.

Act XV of 1895.—An Act to explain the Transfer of Property Act, 1882, so far as relates to grants from the Crown, and to remove certain doubts as to the powers of the Crown in relation to such grants.

Regulation II of 1895.—A Regulation to amend the Upper Burma Land and Revenue Regulation, 1889.

Regulation III of 1895.—A Regulation to provide for the imposition of a Patwari rate in Ajmere and Merwara, and for the appointment of Patwaris and Supervisor Kanungos.

1896.

Act I of 1896.—An Act to amend the Indian Emigration Act, 1883.

Act XIV of 1896.—An Act to amend the Government Tenants (Punjab) Act, 1893.

Act XV of 1896.—An Act to amend the Glanders and Farcy Act, 1879.

Act XVII of 1896.—An Act to amend the Punjab Land-Revenue Act, 1887.

Act XX of 1896.—An Act to amend the law providing for the relief of Jagirdars and Zamindars in Sindh.

Regulation IV of 1896.—A Regulation to amend the Upper Burma Village Regulation, 1887, the Upper Burma Land and Revenue Regulation, 1889, etc.

Regulation VII of 1896.—A Regulation to repeal the Upper Burma Land Acquisition Regulation, 1886.

1897.

Act IV of 1897.—An Act to provide for certain matters relating to Fisheries in British India.

Act VII of 1897.—An Act to amend the Indian Emigration Act, 1883.

Regulation I of 1897.—A Regulation to amend the Upper Burma Ruby Regulation, 1887.

1898.

Act IX of 1898.—An Act to make better provision for the regulation of the importation of live-stock which is liable to be affected by infectious or contagious disorders.

Act XI of 1898.—An Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to Agricultural Tenancies in the Central Provinces.

Act XII of 1898 —An Act to further amend the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, 1881.

Regulation III of 1898.—A Regulation to amend the Upper Burma Land and Revenue Regulation, 1889.

Regulation IV of 1898.—A Regulation to provide for the control and management of Canals in the District of Peshawar.

Regulation V of 1898.—A Regulation to consolidate and amend the law relating to forests, forest-produce and the duty leviable on timber in Upper Burma.

197. The following law was made by the Governor-General in Council in exercise of the powers conferred by Act XXI of 1879.

The Hyderabad Assigned Districts Land-Revenue Code, 1896 —A law to consolidate and amend the law relating to Revenue Officers and the Administration of the land-revenue in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts.

198. The following draft legislative measures have also been under consideration but have not yet been passed into law :— *Measures under consideration.*

1. Bill to amend the Central Provinces Government Wards Act, 1885.

2. Bill to repeal and re-enact the Glanders and Farcy Act, 1879.

3. Draft Regulation to amend and declare the law in force in Coorg with respect to the making and maintenance of records-of-rights in the land, the assessment and collection of land-revenue and other matters relating to land.

199. The undermentioned Enactments and Bills of local legislative Councils have received Lord Elgin's approval in the Department of Revenue and Agriculture or come under consideration during the period under review :— *Local Acts assented to.*

Acts assented to.

Act I (Madras Code) of 1894.—An Act to provide for the conduct of business by the Board of Revenue.

Act II (Madras Code) of 1894.—An Act to amend the law relating to Village Officers in permanently-settled and certain other Estates.

Act V (Bengal Code) of 1894.—An Act to remove doubts which have arisen in connection with the resettlement of land-revenue in temporarily-settled areas and to amend the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885.

Act V (North-Western Provinces Code) of 1894.—An Act to amend the law relating to the levy of rates on land in Oudh.

Act III (Madras Code) of 1895.—An Act to provide for the control and regulation of Hereditary Village Offices.

Act I (Bengal Code) of 1895.—An Act to amend the law relating to the recovery of Public Demands.

Act III (Bengal Code) of 1895.—An Act to provide for the maintenance of Records of Tenant-rights in Bengal, and for the recovery of the cost of Cadastral Surveys and Settlements.

Act I (Madras Code) of 1896.—An Act to exclude the Malabar district and the portion of the Nilgiri district known as South-East Wynaad from the operation of the Madras Rent Recovery Act, 1865.

Act III (Madras Code) of 1896.—An Act to make better provision for the registration of proprietors of Estates subject to the payment of revenue direct to Government in Malabar and the Wynaad.

Act I (Madras Code) of 1897.—An Act to amend the Madras Revenue Recovery Act, 1864.

Act II (Madras Code) of 1897.—An Act to amend the Madras Hereditary Village Offices Act, 1895.

Act IV (Madras Code) of 1897.—An Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to the survey of lands and settlement of boundary disputes.

Act I (Bengal Code) of 1897.—An Act to amend the Public Demands Recovery Act, 1895.

Act IV (Bengal Code) of 1897.—An Act to regulate the commutation of predial conditions or services in parts of Chota Nagpur.

Act V (Bengal Code) of 1897.—An Act to amend the law relating to the partition of Estates.

Act I (North-Western Provinces Code) of 1897.—An Act to provide for the summary realisation of sums due on account of loans granted by the local Government during the pending famine operations.

Act II (Bombay Code) of 1898.—An Act to amend the Sindh Village Officers Act, 1881, as amended by Bombay Act II of 1888.

Act III (Bengal Code) of 1898.—An Act to amend sections 30, 31, 39, 52, and 119 and Chapter X of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885.

Act IV (Burma Code) of 1898.—An Act to declare and amend the law relating to interests in land in towns and villages in Lower Burma.

Bills approved or under consideration.

*Local measures
under consideration.*

1. Bill to amend and declare the law regulating the relations between landlords and their tenants in the Madras Presidency.

2. Bill to amend and declare the law relating to tenancies in the Malabar District of the Madras Presidency.

3. Bill to further amend Madras Act, VIII of 1865, regarding the recovery of rent.

4. Bill to amend the Malabar Compensation for Tenants' Improvement Act 1887.

5. Bill to amend the Madras Court of Wards Regulation, V of 1804.

6. Bill to amend the Khoti Settlement Act, I of 1880.

7. Bill to amend the law relating to the Court of Wards within the territories under the administration of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

8. Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the Court of Wards in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

9. Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to land-revenue and the jurisdiction of revenue officers in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

10. Bill to amend Section 25 of the Oudh Courts Act, 1876, with the object of securing a right of occupancy to ex-proprietors of *Sir* which has been sub-let.

11. Bill to amend the Punjab Land Revenue Act, 1887, and the law relating to the ascertainment and determination in certain cases of the boundaries of riparian estates in the Punjab.

12. Bill to establish the title of the Government in land to be acquired in connection with the making of a canal in the Sindh Sagar Doab.

13. Bill to provide for the better preservation and protection of the tract of territory in and adjacent to the Siwalik mountain range in the Hoshiarpur and Jullunder Districts of the Punjab.

14. Bill to amend the Lower Burma Forest Act, 1881.

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